

# MONUMENTA NIPPONICA MONOGRAPHS

Edited by Sophia University

The Lore  
of the Chinese Lute



Chinese scholar, with attendant carrying his Lute  
(Ming dynasty drawing)



琴 道

THE LORE  
OF THE CHINESE LUTE

39255

An essay  
in Ch'in Ideology

by

R. H. van Gulik, Ph. D.

(高 羅 佩)



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This essay is  
respectfully dedicated to the memory  
of my first teacher of the Lute

**Yeh Shih-meng**

葉 詩 夢

(*obit 1937 aetate 74*)

a gifted musician  
and  
a great gentleman

Presented by C. H. H. H.



## Preface

琴聲雖可狀，琴意誰可聽

*'Although the tones of the Lute may be featured, when listening to them who shall be able to fathom their significance?'*

*From the poem Chiang-shang-chang-ch'in 江上張琴 'Playing the Lute on the river' by the Sung scholar Ou-yang Hsiu (歐陽修, 外集, ch. 1.)*

*This essay is an attempt to describe the cultural significance of a Chinese musical instrument, the seven-stringed Lute. Commonly called ku-ch'in 古琴 'the Lute of antiquity', it was played more than two thousand years ago as it is still today. It is chiefly used as a solo instrument, producing a subdued and highly refined music.*

*But rather than its imposing age or its charming tones, it was the unique place it holds in Chinese culture that prompted this study. For from a remote time the Lute was set apart as the inseparable companion of the literatus, that engaging combination of official, poet, painter and philosopher, till gradually it became in itself a symbol of literary life, with all of its elegant and tasteful pleasures. The musical properties came to be accessory to the instrument as center of a special system of thought, an ideology fitly encompassing the eclectic tendencies characteristic of the old-fashioned Chinese scholar.*

*Although it is with this ideology: its origin, development and final formulation, that the present essay is concerned, there must be frequent references to the music itself. The author, merely a dabbler in musical science, had to take into consideration various aspects of it, withal aware that he encroached upon ground more properly reserved for musicologists. Among these, the author would be most gratified to find readers, although he addresses himself primarily to orientalist, in the hope of drawing attention to one of the lesser known aspects of Chinese culture. Musicologists will discover here a veritable treasure house of ancient Chinese music in general, a rich source which might, with scientific analysis based on historical musicological principles, revolutionise the opinions on ancient Chinese music current now both east and west. This music of the Lute may truly and proudly call itself t'ai-ku-ch'in 太古遺音, 'tones bequeathed from high antiquity'.*

*It has seemed desirable to include a more or less exhaustive list and a critical discussion of the sources where these musicological materials are found, and it is hoped that they may serve musicologists in the further study of problems which could be but briefly treated here. Then, should one among them compile a complete handbook of Lute music, the author would feel at least discharged of part of the large debt he owes it. Many were the joys the Lute gave him. Old melodies enlivened weary summer evenings, and playing some light prelude often heartened him to attack again knotty passages in many a musty Chinese volume. During the writing of the following pages about the ideology of the Lute, its music was an invariable inspiration.*

*Here a few remarks may be added on the use of the word 'Lute' as a translation of the Chinese word 'ch'in'. In selecting for oriental musical instruments equivalents in a western language one must choose between those which would suggest the outer form, and others of closer cultural reference. In the former respect 'cither'<sup>†</sup> would seem most appropriate for the ch'in, but because of the unique position it occupies in Chinese culture the author has preferred to follow the latter way, adopting the word which since olden times in the west has been associated with all that is artistic and refined, and sung by poets. Therefore 'ch'in' is translated 'Lute', and the word 'cither' is kept for such instruments as the sé and chêng, the construction of which, in any case, comes nearer that of the western cither.*

*The body of this essay appeared in four successive issues of the semi-annual periodical Monumenta Nipponica, published at Tokyo. The author wishes to express his gratitude to the editor of that journal, through whose kindness it was made possible that this essay appears now in book form. Since part of it was printed from the moulds of the original type, it could not be made to answer to high typographical standards, and while a few misprints could be corrected, many page references had to be cancelled. The reader is requested to refer frequently to the index, to which much care has been given.*

*To the original two appendices, both bibliographical, there have been added two more. Appendix III, The Lute as an antique, is the revision of an article On three Antique Lutes, which appeared in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, second series, no. XVII. The author's thanks are due to the Society for kind permission to reprint the illustrations that accompanied the said article. Appendix IV, The Chinese Lute in Japan, is based upon an article entitled Chinese literary music and its introduction*

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<sup>†</sup>In English the word cither is rather loosely applied to various kinds of stringed instruments. I use it in the sense of the cither played in Tyrol and Austria: a flat, wooden sounding box, over which about thirty strings are strung. It is played while lying on a table, with both hands.



into Japan, which was contributed to the commemoration volume offered Prof. Chozo Muto, in 1937. Since the publication of these two studies a number of new materials have been found, necessitating a change in several of the statements made. Needless to say, the present essay supersedes all the author's earlier publications on the subject.

Finally, the writer has been induced by friends to add a Chinese preface wherein he has tried to summarise the significance of the Lute. It is presented with diffidence, in the knowledge that a westerner's excursions into Chinese composition must remain forever hazardous.

\* \* \*

The author would have it understood that these pages are, most literally, an essay : an approach to the subject, an attempt to describe it, nothing more. The field being almost untouched, its materials had to be collected in originali and one by one, sometimes more than a year passing by before a rare item was at last found in the dim corner of some Chinese or Japanese bookstore. The argument which grew with the investigation of these texts led by frequent, unmarked cross-roads where the best direction may not always have been chosen ; moreover, official duties preventing sustained application, it is feared that along the way not a few errors or misstatements have escaped detection. In the end the author presumes to claim only the credit attendant on an honest effort : original sources are quoted in full, and each translation is accompanied by the Chinese text. The aim was to lay the full materials before the reader, at once enabling him to trace mistakes and supplying him with guideposts to further research.

\* \* \*

Quite apart from scientific aspects, the description of beauty must always be an invidious undertaking, whether it be the beauty of form, thought, colour, or of tones. In endeavouring to write of things elusive as these one experiences perforce a feeling of frustration ; one searches out words, only to realize their insufficiency to express the inexpressible.

Yet the exercise is restful to the mind, bringing as it does the happy thought that however inadequate and imperfect the description of it, beauty itself is perfect and shall last forever. As the Sung scholar Su Tung-p'o says in his celebrated poetical essay on the Red Wall : 'There remain only the clear breeze over the river, and the moon shining over the mountains. The ear catches the wind, and it is sound. The eye sees the moon, and it becomes colour. These things no one can forbid us to take in: they shall be forever with us, for they are part of the never exhausted fullness of the creation'.<sup>1</sup>

1) 惟江上之清風，與山間之明月，耳得之而爲聲，目遇之而爲色，取之無禁，用之不竭，是造物者之無盡藏也。

*It was such considerations that influenced the author to publish this study, feeble though the effort be it represents ; for when his bones and these pages shall be mouldering, the wind will still rustle in the pines, and the rivulet murmur among mossgrown stones. And ultimately it may be said that perhaps the sole design of this essay was to show that Lute music in its simplest essence is the echo of these undying voices of living nature.*

\* \* \*

*In the forty-first year of the Wan-li period, A.D. 1613, the Ming scholar Lin Yu-lin published a book on stones and rocks.<sup>2</sup> A year later<sup>3</sup> he wrote a treatise on the Lute, in the introductory remarks to which he says : ' First I published a book on stones, in four chapters ; it distracted my mind from the worries of daily life and made me dwell among mists and coloured hazes. Now I follow it up with this Elegance of the Lute . . . For there exists a close harmony between stones and the silk strings. Always when I sit confronting the many-hued rocks and mountains, and play a tune on my antique Lute while the moon shines through the spreading pines, I feel greatly elated and my thoughts are borne away to unearthly regions. Therefore, having published my book on stones, I felt it incumbent upon me also to write this treatise on the Lute'.<sup>4</sup>)*

*The present writer in 1938 published an essay on Chinese inkstones<sup>5</sup>. When now in 1939 he ventures to send forth this other on the Lute, he feels somewhat reassured, notwithstanding its many shortcomings ; for he hopes that at least he adheres to the old approved principle of ' treading in the footsteps of the ancients.'*

Netherlands Legation  
Tokyo, 22 Dec. 1939

R. H. van Gulik

2) *Su-yüan-shih-pu* 素園石譜, by Lin Yu-lin 林有麟; the original Ming edition is now very scarce. In 1924 a reprint was published by the Zuhon-sōkankai 圖本叢刊會, at Tokyo.

3) *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* 青蓮齋琴雅, cf. Appendix II, no. 6.

4) 余先梓石譜四卷, 烟霞一洗塵俗, 琴雅繼出, 蓋絲與石原自作合, 每當山石璘璘, 疏松月上, 奏瑤琴一曲於其間, 飄々欲仙矣, 故有石譜, 似不可無琴雅。

5) *Mi Fu on Inkstones*, publ. by The French Bookstore, Peking 1938.



## 後序

夫此者內也、彼者外也、故老子曰、去彼取此、蟬蛻塵埃之中、優遊忽荒之表、亦取其適而已、樂由中出、故是此而非彼也、然衆樂琴爲之首、古之君子、無間隱顯、未嘗一日廢琴、所以尊生外物養其內也、茅齋蕭然、值清風拂幌、朗月臨軒、更深人靜、萬籟希聲、瀏覽黃卷、聞鼓綠綺、寫山水於寸心、歛宇宙於容膝、恬然忘百慮、豈必虞山目耕、雲林清閼、蔭長松、對白鶴、乃爲自適哉、藏琴非必佳、彈曲非必多、手應乎心、斯爲貴矣、丙子秋莫、於宛平得一琴、殆明清間物、無銘、撫之鏗鏘有餘韻、弗敢冒高士選雅名、銘之曰、無名、非欲以觀衆妙、冀有符於道德之旨云

余既作琴道七卷、意有未盡、更申之如右、然於所欲言、未罄什一云

和蘭國笑忘高羅佩識於芝臺之中琴室

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface .....	P.	I
Chinese Preface .....	P.	V
Chapter I. Introduction .....	P.	1
<p>Characteristics of Lute music—Twofold function of the Lute :  orchestral and solo instrument—The solo Lute the special instru-  ment of the literary class—Description of the Lute, and of the way  it is played—Origin and development of Lute and Sê—Place of the  Lute and Lute music in Chinese cultural life—Lute music in Japan—  Present condition of Lute music.</p>		
Chapter II. Classical conceptions of music .....	P.	22
<p>Chinese classical conceptions of music, according to the <i>Yüeh-chi</i>—  Twofold aspect of music, cosmological and political—Music belongs  to Heaven, and corresponds to what is heavenly in man—It is a means  for perfecting the government, and for improving the individual—  Music as a source for pleasure not recognized.</p>		
Chapter III. Study of the Lute .....	P.	27
1. Sources .....	P.	27
<p>More materials on the significance of the Lute than on Lute music  —Three groups of materials : 1. Scattered references to the Lute  in literature, 2. Special treatises on the Lute, and 3. <i>Ch'in-pu</i>, hand-  books for the Lute—Reasons for the rarity of <i>ch'in-pu</i>—Their con-  tents—Recent Chinese publications on the study of the Lute.</p>		
2. Origins and characteristics .....	P.	34
<p>The establishment and evolution of <i>ch'in</i> ideology due chiefly to  three factors : a. Confucianist (social), b. Taoist (religious), and c.  psychological—Buddhist influences : a. Mantrayanic magic formula  as Lute tune, a Lamaist hymn adapted to the Lute—A summary of  the history of <i>ch'in</i> ideology.</p>		
3. Disposition and discipline of the Lute player.....	P.	56
<p>The Lute should be played amidst charming scenery, or in the lib-  rary ; before flowers ; during a moonlight night ; while burning  incense—Rules defining the classes of people for whom the Lute  may be played, and for whom not—Occasional sectarian views, ex-  cluding Buddhists—Correct way of carrying the Lute, Lute pages—  <i>Ch'in-shih</i>, the Lute Chamber—<i>Ch'in-shê</i>, spiritual community of</p>		

the Lute.	P. 71
4. Selected texts .....	P. 84
Chapter IV. The significance of the tunes .....	
The Ming repertoire taken as the basis for a study of the significance of the tunes—Significance of the modes—Chinese <i>tiao-i</i> , and Japanese <i>netori</i> —The tunes divided according to their significance into five groups—1. Tunes describing a mystic journey (Taoistic)—2. Tunes of a semi-historical character (Confucianist)—3. Musical versions of literary productions—4. Tunes descriptive of nature—5. Tunes descriptive of literary life—Summary.	
Chapter V. Symbolism	
1. Symbolism of terms and names.....	P. 98
Symbolism of the technical names for various parts of the Lute—Preponderance of the elements Dragon and Phoenix—Symbolism of special names given to Lutes.	
2. Symbolism of tones.....	P. 103
Great importance of timbre in Lute music—Chinese attempts to define the various sorts of timbre—Lêng Ch'ien's Sixteen Definitions, in text and translation.	
3. Symbolism of the finger technique .....	P. 114
Postures of the hands, and their explanations—Set of special pictures illustrating the finger technique, their various editions—Technical terminology used in the Lute handbooks—The abbreviated signs ( <i>chien-tzu</i> )—List of elementary <i>chien-tzu</i> , their meaning and symbolism—Examples of how the notation is read.	
Chapter VI. Associations	
1. Lute and crane.....	P. 134
General background : most of the objects that surround the scholar originally had a magical meaning—They are intended to strengthen his vital powers, and to prolong his life—The crane : symbol of longevity—Closely connected with the Immortals—The constant companion of the scholar—Rearing cranes the special task of the Lute player—Lute players celebrate the excellent qualities of the crane.	
2. Lute and plum tree, Lute and pine tree .....	P. 141
Plum blossom and pine tree a favourite subject of Chinese artists—The plum blossom : its connection with woman and sexual life—Plum blossom and Lute player—The pine tree : an old symbol for long life.	

3. Lute and sword .....	P. 146
The sword maintained as attribute of the scholar because of its magic properties—The sword wards off evil forces, and is a container of vital energy—Evidence from Chinese popular religion—Stories about the magical properties of the sword in older literature—Lute and sword mentioned together as companions of the scholar.	
4. Some famous stories and much-quoted passages relating to the Lute .....	P. 149
Chapter VII. Conclusions .....	P. 156
Brief survey of the history of the Lute and its ideology—Earliest history, and development during subsequent periods—Great importance of the Ming period: greatest florescence of the study of the Lute—Gradual decline during the Ch'ing dynasty—Present state of the Lute, and future possibilities.	
Appendix I. Occidental literature on the Lute .....	P. 163
Appendix II. Chinese literature on the Lute .....	P. 167
Appendix III. The Lute as an antique .....	P. 173
Appendix IV. The Chinese Lute in Japan .....	P. 197
Index.	

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## LIST OF THE VIGNETTES

- Opposite p. 1 The Lute master Hsü Shih-ch'i 徐時琪 putting on the strings. After the frontispice of his Lute handbook *Lü-ch'i-hsin-shêng* 綠綺新聲, publ. in the Wan-li period.
- Page 56 The *shêng* 笙, ancient Chinese mouth-organ.
- Page 98 Talking with the Lute on one's knees; from the well-known handbook for painters *Chieh-tzu-yüan-hua-ch'uan*.
- Page 103 Young nobleman playing the Lute; from an illustrated Ming edition of the play *Hsi-hsiang-chi* 西廂記.
- Page 141 The *hsüan* 壎, ancient ocarina; from the *Chih-shêng-shih-tien-li-yüeh-chi* 直省釋奠禮樂記, preface 1891.
- Page 146 Playing the Lute in the intimacy of the library; from an illustrated Ming edition of the play *Hsiu-ju-chi* 繡襦記.
- Page 149 The *p'ai-hsiao* 排簫, Pandean pipes used in the ceremonial orchestra; from the *Chih-shêng-shih-tien-li-yüeh-chi*.
- Page 156 The Lute as played in the ceremonial orchestra; same source as the preceding item.
- Page 163 Lute inscription, reading *i-ch'in-shuo-fa* 以琴說法, "promulgating the Dharma by means of the Lute"; from the *K'u-mu-ch'an-ch'in-pu* (see p. 52).

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The two Chinese characters on the cover of this book read *ch'in-tao*; the character *ch'in* is traced after the inscription reproduced in the *K'u-mu-ch'an-ch'in-pu* (see above), the character *tao* is taken from a stone inscription of the Han period, the *Lou-shou-pei*.



## CHAPTER THE FIRST

### INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of Lute music—Twofold function of the Lute: orchestral and solo instrument—The solo Lute the special instrument of the literary class—Description of the Lute, and of the way it is played—Origin and development of the Lute and Sê—Place of the Lute and Lute music in Chinese cultural life—Lute music in Japan.

The music of the ancient Lute as a solo instrument is widely different from all other sorts of Chinese music: it stands entirely alone, both in its character and in the important place it occupies in the life of the literary class.

It is easier to describe this music in negative than in positive terms. It may be stated at once that it is not like that of any of the better known stringed instruments to be found in present-day China, as, for instance, the two-stringed violin *érh-hu* 二胡, or the four-stringed mandoline *p'i-p'a* 琵琶 or the Moon guitar *yüeh-ch'in* 月琴. The music of these instruments being highly melodical, it can be appreciated by anyone who possesses some capacity for musical adaptation. At first hearing their music may seem a little strange, but the ear soon adjusts itself to the quaint chords and unusual movements, and this music is easily understood.

The Lute, on the contrary, is not so easy to appreciate, chiefly because its music is not primarily melodical. Its beauty lies not so much in the succession of notes as in each separate note in itself. 'Painting with sounds' might be a way to describe its essential quality.

Each note is an entity in itself, calculated to evoke in the mind of the hearer a special reaction. The timbre being thus of the utmost importance, there are very great possibilities of modifying the colouring of one and the same tone. In order to understand and appreciate this music, the ear must learn to distinguish subtle nuances: the same note, produced on a different string, has a different colour; the same string, when pulled by the fore finger or the middle finger of the right hand, has a different timbre. The technique by which these variations in timbre are effected is extremely complicated: of the vibrato alone there exist no less than 26 varieties. The impression made by one note is followed by another, still another. There is thus a compelling, inevitable

suggestion of a mood, an atmosphere, which impresses upon the hearer the sentiment that inspired the composer.

Playing the Lute is therefore entirely a question of touch, necessitating complete mastery of the finger technique of both hands.<sup>1)</sup> This is the reason why it takes a fairly long time before one can play the Lute. Anyone with an ear for music may, in a month or so, become a tolerably efficient performer on the êrh-hu, or, in a few months, on the p'i-p'a. But studying the Lute is like playing the violin or piano: it takes years of assiduous and regular practice. The results, however, reward the labour, as the best of China's past has found its expression in the music of the Lute.

The origins of the Lute and Lute music lie hidden in the mist of China's remotest past.

According to literary tradition, from the most ancient times the Lute had two essentially different functions. In the first place it was a part of the orchestra, played at ceremonies in the ancestral temple and on other solemn occasions, and further at banquets, for entertaining guests. On the other hand the Lute in itself was used as a solo-instrument by the individual player, for his own enjoyment and whenever he liked.

It is in this twofold function that the Lute occurs through all the dynasties, up to the present day.

The orchestral Lute is essentially the same as the solo instrument, the only difference being in the way it is played. Whilst the music of the solo Lute, as I pointed out above, is exceedingly complicated, the technique of the orchestral Lute is very simple, the left hand being hardly used at all. In the orchestra for Confucian ceremonies six Lutes are used, three on the left and three on the right. As its sounds are low, its music is drowned in the din of the percussion instruments, and playing the Lute in the ceremonial orchestra is not a very gratifying task. According to a dissertation on music dating from the Sung period,<sup>2)</sup> there existed, however, during the Chou dynasty other orchestras, where the Lute played a more prominent part: thus the court music called *t'ang-shang-yüeh* 堂上樂 consisted chiefly of chant, accompanied by stringed instruments. In this orchestra there were 48 singers, accompanied by, inter alia, 12 Lutes. Still in Chinese books on music, and in literature generally, the orchestral Lute is only occasionally mentioned, and is not distinguished especially among the other instruments of the orchestra.

1) Cf. *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu* (Appendix II, 14), ch. 1, p. 63: 音韻之妙, 全賴乎指法之細微.

2) *Yüeh-shu* 樂書, by Ch'ên Yang 陳陽 11th century, ch. 130.



The solo Lute, however, has been fixed by tradition as the special instrument of the literary class, and as such since time immemorial has enjoyed a privileged position. The solo Lute is called the 'Instrument of the Holy Kings' 聖王之器, its music 'Tones bequeathed by High Antiquity' 太古遺音.

Father Amiot, whose treatise on Chinese music was published in 1780, was much impressed by the deep significance which the Chinese literati attached to the Lute. He says: 'In short, the Chinese say that the construction of the Lute, its shape, everything about it is doctrine, everything expresses a special meaning or symbolism. They add that the sounds it produces disperse the darkness of the mind, and calm the passions; but in order to obtain these precious benefits from it, one must be an advanced student of wisdom. Only sages should touch the Lute: ordinary people must content themselves with contemplating it in deep silence and with the greatest respect.' And in a note he adds: 'Our Emperor (i.e. Ch'ien-lung, 1736-1795) himself has several times consented to be painted in the attitude of a man profoundly absorbed in playing the instrument that in his Empire is considered as belonging by right to those whose studies are concentrated on literature and wisdom.'<sup>3)</sup>

Around the solo Lute has gathered a rich and varied lore, which has given rise to a special class of literature. It is this system of thought that surrounds the Lute, this ch'in ideology, that forms the subject of these pages. Therefore the orchestral Lute is mentioned only for the sake of comparison, and especially when discussing historical problems, where the orchestral and the solo Lute must be considered together. Before touching these questions regarding the history of the Lute I will first give here a short description of the instrument itself, and of the way in which it is played.

According to literary tradition the Lute has undergone hardly any changes during the period of more than two thousand years when it was

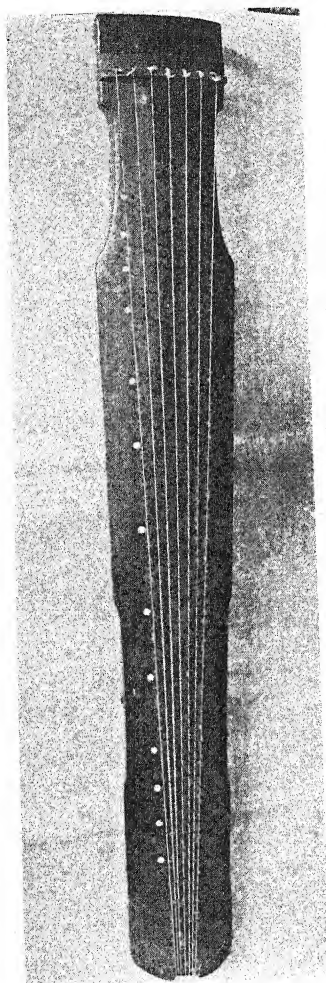
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3) Cf. Mémoires concernant les Chinois, vol. VI, *Mémoires sur la Musique des Chinois tant anciens que modernes*, p. 56-57: . . . en un mot, la construction du Kin, sa forme, disent les Chinois, tout en lui est doctrine, tout y est représentation ou symbole. Les sons qu'on en tire, ajoutent-ils, dissipent les ténèbres de l'entendement, & rendent le calme aux passions; mais pour en recueillir ces précieux fruits, il faut être avancé dans l'étude de la sagesse. Les seuls sages doivent toucher le Kin, les personnes ordinaires doivent se contenter de le regarder dans un profond silence & avec le plus grand respect'. P. 58, footnote: 'Notre Empereur lui-même n'a pas dédaigné de se faire peindre plusieurs fois dans l'attitude d'un homme profondément occupé à tirer des sons d'un instrument, qui passe dans son Empire pour être dévolu de droit à ceux qui font leur principale étude de la littérature & de la sagesse'.

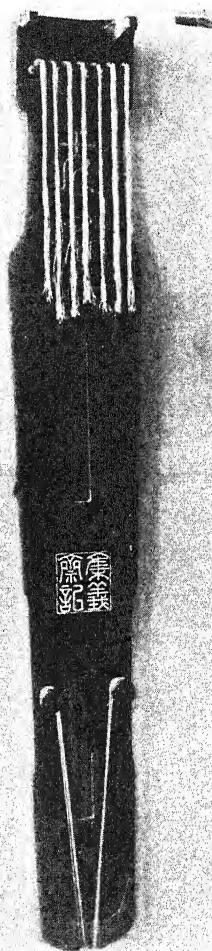
the favourite instrument of the literary class. The only fact that all sources agree upon is that the number of strings was originally five, representing the five tones of the Chinese pentatonic gamut. Later, two more strings, giving two halftones were added, bringing the number of strings up to seven ; this modification is said to have been introduced in the Chou period.

The body of the Lute, which functions as sounding-box, consists of two boards of a special kind of wood, superimposed one upon the other (cf. illustr. I). The upper part, made of *t'ung* 桐 wood, is concave, while the lower part, made of *tzü* 梓 wood is flat, with two openings for transmitting the sound. Over this sounding box the seven silk strings are strung. They are all of different thicknesses : that farthest from the player and giving the lowest tone is the thickest, while that nearest the player and giving the highest tone is the thinnest of all. On the left the strings, in two groups of three and four, are fastened to two wooden knobs driven into the bottom board. On the right side each string ends in a peculiar knot. It passes through a loop of silk, which can be twisted by turning a tuning peg made of wood, ivory or jade. The knot prevents the string from slipping when it is tuned by twisting the loop. On the right side, where the loops pass through holes in the body of the sounding box, a bridge is set up, made of a special kind of hard wood (usually red sandal wood, *tzü-t'an* 紫檀), glued to the upper board. A little to the left of this bridge the fingers of the right hand, except the little finger, pull the strings. The four fingers of the left hand stop the strings at various places, the hand being guided by thirteen studs made of some precious metal or of mother-of-pearl, and embedded in the varnish along the front side of the sounding box. In playing the performer lays the Lute on a special table, so that the side where the tuning pegs are is at his right. He sits on a comparatively high seat, preferably without elbow rests, since these might interfere with the free movement of the arms (cf. ill. III).

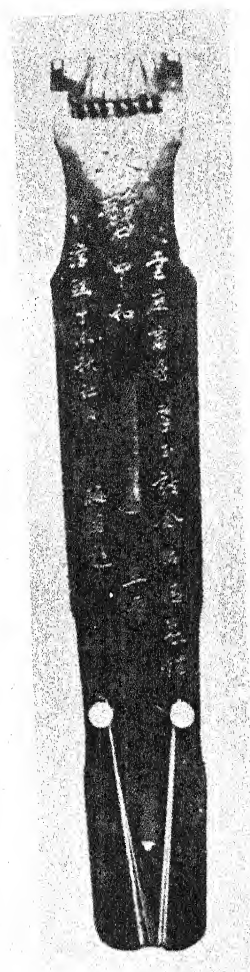
As to the method of playing, I have already pointed out above that the timbre of a note, and therefore the finger technique, is of the highest importance. This appears clearly from the way in which Lute music is noted down. The Lute has a peculiar system of notation of its own, the most striking feature being that no notes are indicated, but only the way a string is played. Each note is thus represented indirectly by a complicated symbol, consisting of a combination of abbreviated Chinese characters, which indicate precisely (a) the string to be played, (b) with regard to the right hand, which finger should pull the string, inwards or



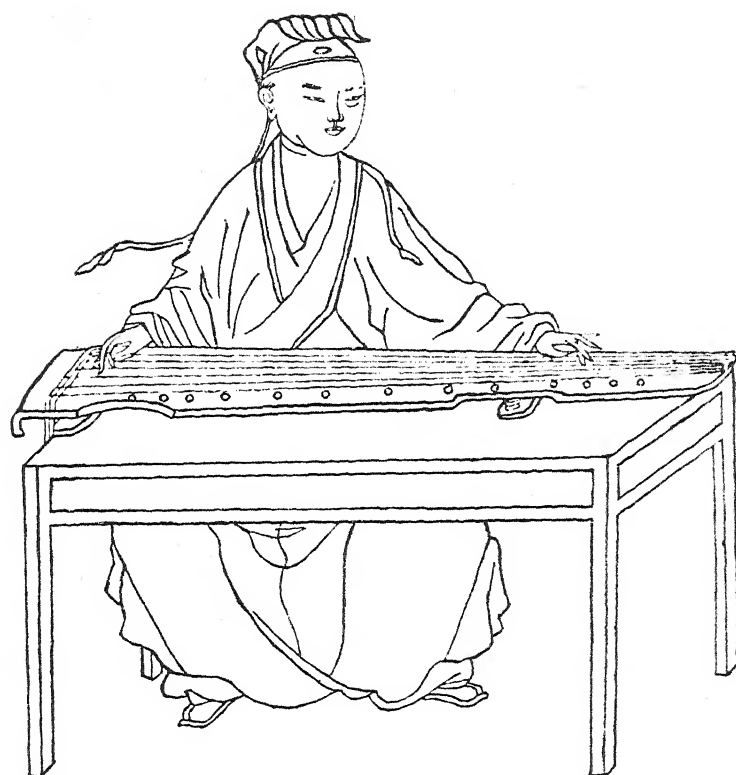
Ia A Lute dating from the end of the Ming period. Author's collection. Note the 13 studs inlaid along the left side, and the bridge on top, where the strings are fastened to the silk loops.



Ib Bottom board of the same Lute. Note the two apertures for transmitting the sound, and the silk loops hanging down, coming out of the tuning pegs. Name (covered by the silk loops) *Wu-ming* 無名; seal: *Chi-i-chai-chi* 集義齋記.



II A Sung Lute, dated 1187. Collection of Mr. Cheng Ying-sun 鄭穎孫, at Peking. Bottom board, showing inscriptions, and the two jade knobs, to which the strings are fastened.



III Playing the Lute  
From : *Ch'in-hsüeh-ju-mên*, cf. Appendix II no. 18.



outwards ; and (c) with regard to the left hand, which finger should touch the string, at what place and in what way. This system of notation, for which more than two hundred special signs are used, is called *chien-tzû* 減字 'abbreviated characters.' Literary sources are vague as to the date of its invention, but it seems to go back at least to the first centuries A.D. For a description of the *chien-tzû* cf. below, chapter V, section 3, *Symbolism of the Finger technique*.

At first sight this notation seems complicated and confusing, but after a little practice it becomes quite easy to use it. Besides, since it is so explicit in its directions, after this system came into use Lute music could during many centuries be transmitted with a fair amount of accuracy.

Literary tradition asserts that the original function of the Lute was as a solo instrument : as such it was played by its inventor, one of the ancient Chinese mythical Emperors, said to have ruled in or about the third millennium B. C. Some sources say it was the Emperor Fu-hsi<sup>4)</sup>, others Shên-nung,<sup>5)</sup> others Shun.<sup>6)</sup>

We may leave aside the question which claim for priority is justified ; in any case literary tradition asserts that the Lute in general is a very ancient Chinese instrument, existing [already in the beginning of the Shang 商 period, for which the dates 1766-1122 B. C. are given.

But when we investigate reliable documents of this ancient period, such as inscriptions on fragments of oracle bones and tortoise-shell, and on bronze sacrificial vessels, the truth of this tradition regarding the high age of the Lute appears very questionable.

An investigation of these ancient documents seems to point to the fact that the earliest Chinese music consisted chiefly of percussion instruments, like drums, bells and sonorous stones.<sup>7)</sup> The character for music itself, *yüeh* 樂, suggests a wooden standard with bells or drums attached to it.<sup>8)</sup> The next stage seems to have been the addition of

4) Cf. *Ch'in-tsaio* (Appendix II, 1), opening line : 'Formerly Fu-hsi made the Lute' 昔伏羲氏作琴.

5) *Fêng-su-t'ung-i*, see below, p. 71.

6) Cf. *Li-chi*, *Yüeh-chi*, see below, in ch. II : 'In ancient times Shun made the five-stringed Lute' 昔者舜作五弦之琴.

7) The fact that the character *ku* 鼓, occurring frequently in inscriptions on oracle bones and representing a drum beaten by a stick, has the general meaning of producing music (出音曰鼓, cf. *Chou-li*, ch. 23, commentary), also points to the priority of percussion instruments. From ancient times to the present day this word *ku* is used for 'playing the Lute', 鼓琴 ; expressions like *t'an-ch'in* 彈琴 and *chang-ch'in* 張琴 are of later date.

8) Cf. illustration V, No. 23, the character *yüeh* as it appears on oracle-bones, and No. 24, as it appears in the small seal script.

bamboo flutes. In the Book of Odes, *Shih-ching* 詩經 there is preserved an interesting hymn, called *No* 那, describing music, and which is attributed to the Shang period; various kinds of drums, sonorous stones and flutes are mentioned, but not a single stringed instrument. I have looked through several works on inscriptions on bone and tortoise shell, consulting also the convenient index *Chia-ku-wên-pien* 甲骨文編, published in 1934 by Sun Hai-po 孫海波. But I have not yet found any indication of the existence of a stringed instrument, while there are numerous references to bells, drums and sonorous stones.

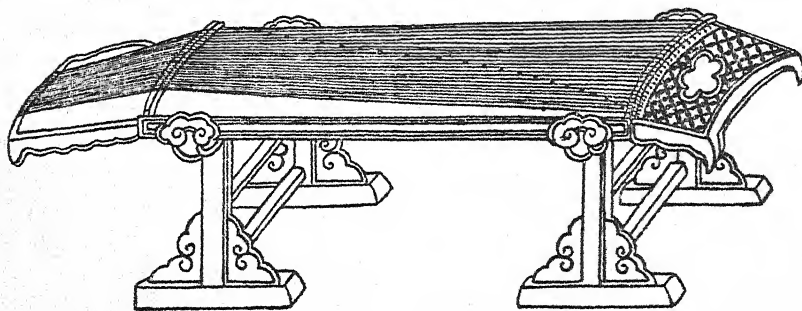


Figure IV. The sê, ancient cither with 25 strings.

The old trustworthy references to the Lute occur in other songs of the Book of Odes, e.g. *Lu-ming*, 鹿鳴 which is ascribed to the Western Chou period (B.C. 1122-770). It is a 'festal ode, sung at entertainments to the king's ministers, and guests from the feudal states' (Legge). The host says: 'I have elegant guests, the sê is played, the reed-organ is blown' 我有嘉賓，鼓瑟吹笙；and in the third strophe: 'I have elegant guests, the sê is played, the Lute is played' 鼓瑟鼓琴. The ode *Kuan-chü* 關雎 (the first ode of the *Shih-ching*) describes the music played at the home coming of a bride: here ch'in and sê are mentioned, next to bells and drums: 琴瑟友之，鐘鼓樂之. Another ode, *Ch'ang-ti* 常棣 uses the harmony of Lute and sê being played together as a symbol<sup>9)</sup>: 'Happy union with wife and children is like the music of ch'in and sê' 妻子好合，如鼓瑟琴 (Legge, II, 1, Ode IV).

Here the Lute is mentioned together with the other ancient stringed instrument, the sê. In literature the Lute is nearly always connected

9) By allusion to this line the harmony of the ch'in and sê is used in later literature as a fixed symbol for conjugal love. Cf. expressions like *ch'in-sê-chih-hsien* 琴瑟之絃 'husband and wife', *ch'in-sê-pu-hsieh*, 琴瑟不叶 'conjugal discord', etc.

with the *sê*, *ch'in-sê* 琴瑟 being in constant use.<sup>10)</sup>

For the purpose of historical investigation it is impossible to consider the Lute apart from the *sê*. I will therefore give here a brief description of this other stringed instrument of antiquity.

The *sê* is considerably bigger than the Lute, but much simpler in construction. It has 25 strings, all of equal length and thickness. Each string runs over a separate, moveable bridge, the tuning being adjusted by pushing this bridge to the left or to the right. When all strings are tuned, the moveable bridges are seen to run in an oblique row over the surface of the instrument, a figure which is compared with a flight of wild geese (雁陣). The *sê* is played with both hands, touching the strings two at a time to the right of the bridges. As it is a heavy and rather unwieldy instrument, it is placed on a couple of low trestles (cf. ill. IV).

During the latter half of the Chou dynasty, next to their orchestral function, both *ch'in* and *sê* were played as solo instruments. This is shown by numerous passages in the older literature. Prince Hsiang (襄公, 571-540 B.C.) had the Lute taught to his favorite concubine (cf. *Ch'un-ch'iu*, ed. Couvreur, Book IX, 14th year). Confucius also is said to have played the Lute (*Chuang-tzû* 莊子, ch. 31 Yu-fu 漁父; *Chia-yü* 家語, ch. 15, ch. 35), as well as the *sê* (*Lun-yü* 論語, Book XVII, ch. XX, 1). Two of his disciples, Tzû-lu and Tsêng Tien are mentioned as *sê* players (Tzû-lu: *Lun-yü*, Book XI, ch. XIV, 1; Tsêng Tien: *ibid.*, Book XI, ch. XXV, 7). Further the Book of Rites *Li-chi* 禮記 refers repeatedly to the Lute and *sê* as solo instruments: they may not be played by a man whose parents are ill (Ed. Couvreur, I, I, 4); one should not step over a Lute or *sê* belonging to one's master (I, I, 3); an official should always have both instruments near at hand (I, II, 1), etc.

10) Purposely I have left out of consideration here the passage of the Book of History (*Shu-ching* 書經, ch. I-chi 益稷), where the Lute and *sê* are mentioned. Here the music master K'uei (in some later texts exalted as the creator of all music) praises the power of the music directed by him: 'K'uei said: When the sounding stone is tapped or strongly struck; when the Lutes (i.e. *ch'in* and *sê*) are swept or gently touched to accompany the singing: the (imperial) progenitors come to the service, etc.' (Legge, Book of History p. 87 (堦曰擊鳴球, 搏拊琴瑟, 以詠祖考來格). The fortunes of the text of the *Shu-ching* are well-known (cf. P. Pelliot, *Le Chou-tching en caractères anciens et le Chang-chou-che-wen*, in: *Mémoires concernant l'Asie Orientale*, II, Paris 1816). Although the chapter I-chi belongs to the so-called 'text in modern writing,' which was noted down by Fu Sheng shortly after the burning of the books in 213 B.C., the text shows evident signs of having been remodelled by later scholars. We must remember that inscriptions on oracle bones show that the ancient ceremonial orchestra was much simpler than one would conclude from this passage. I suspect that it was mixed up somehow or other with the next one: 'K'uei said: Oh! when I strike the stone or tap the stone, all kinds of animals lead on one another to gambol, etc. 堦曰於予擊石拊石, 百獸率舞. Perhaps the former longer passage is an elaboration of this shorter second one, which mentions only sonorous stones, and bears a more archaic character.

Already during the Chou dynasty the Lute seems to have been preferred to the *sê* for serious music. Many references are made to famous masters of the Lute (e.g. in *Chuang-tzu* : Chao Wên 昭文, in *Lieh-tzu* : Ku Pa 瓠巴, Master Wên 師文, Master Hsiang 師襄, Po-ya 伯牙) whilst the *sê* is mentioned only occasionally. Beginning with the Han period the *sê* as solo instrument is hardly mentioned at all. It is said that the Han Emperor Kao-tsu (高祖, 206-195 B.C.) had two concubines, T'ang-shan fu-jên 唐山夫人 and Ch'i fu-jên 戚夫人, who were both experts on the *sê*, but other references are rare.

That the *sê* as a solo instrument fell into disuse is probably due to the rise of a new instrument, the *chêng* 箏, in construction not unlike the *sê*, but smaller and much easier to handle. The *chêng* is said to have been invented by Mêng T'ien (蒙恬, died 210 B.C.), who is also credited with the invention of the Chinese writing brush.

Chinese sources<sup>11)</sup> assert that the tradition of the *sê* as a solo instrument was entirely forgotten from the Eastern Chin period (東晉, 317-420 A.D.) Later efforts at reviving the solo *sê* appear to have been more or less of an archaeological nature: the famous musician and poet of the 12th century Chiang K'uei 姜夔 studied the *sê*, and during the Yüan dynasty (1280-1368) the scholar Hsiung P'êng-lai 熊朋來 composed a *Sê-pu* 瑟譜. Only in comparatively recent times have serious efforts been made to reconstruct the methods of playing the *sê* as a solo instrument or together with the Lute.<sup>12)</sup>

11) E.g. the preface to the *Sê-pu* by Hsiung P'êng-lai.

12) At Canton there was published in 1870 a *Ch'in-sê-ho-pu* 琴瑟合譜, 'Handbook for playing ch'in and sê together', written by the scholar Ch'ing Jui (慶瑞, style Hui-shan 輝山). Having studied the Lute for several years, he became interested in the *sê*, but could find nobody to teach him this instrument. Then he set to work with the handbook of Hsiung P'êng-lai (see above), but came to the conclusion that Hsiung's method was not in accordance with the rules of ancient music. As his wife, a lady called Li Chih-hsien 李芝仙 was an able musician, he made her accompany on the *sê* his Lute playing, and on the basis of these experiments he fixed a tuning for the *sê*, and composed the notation for eight old melodies, set to be played by the Lute, accompanied by the *sê*; these tunes are published in his handbook. I have tried out his system, using instead of the *sê* a so-called *fu-ch'in* 拊琴, a variant of the *chêng* 箏, used in Kiangsu province, which is exactly the same as the small *sê* (小瑟, 15 strings), but easier to handle since it has tuning pegs. I find that he aims at a complete unison effect, each note of the ch'in being the same as the corresponding note on the *sê*. He introduces a vibrato for the *sê*, to be effected by pressing down a string left to the bridge, as is done while playing the Japanese *koto*. The results of his method are not very interesting. When unisono is aimed at, it is much better to play a ch'in duo, as is often done by Chinese Lute players. Moreover I doubt very much whether Ch'ing's method gives any idea of the way the *sê* was played in ancient days.

In 1838 Ch'iu Chih-lu (邱之桂; his biography is to be found in *Kuo-ch'ao-ch'i-*



Whilst the *sê* as a solo instrument fell into oblivion at an early date, the Lute, on the contrary, has firmly maintained its position as a solo instrument during more than two thousand years—up to the present day.

Now we can return to the problem, touched upon above, of the origin of the Lute. Although, as I pointed out, stringed instruments appear to have come into use later than instruments of percussion and flutes, still the origin of the Lute dates from ancient times, let us say from the latter part of the Shang dynasty, about 1400 B.C. For investigating this question literary data are insufficient; besides such data are misleading because they were artificially made to conform to the literary tradition of the Confucianist school of thought.

The only method for obtaining at least some vague idea about the oldest history of the Lute, is, as far as I can see, to leave literary tradition aside, and to concentrate upon palaeographical data, comparing the various old forms of the two characters used to represent *ch'in* and *sê*, which in the modern script are 琴 and 瑟.

In their modern form both characters are composed of an upper and a lower part. They both have the upper part in common; this element is explained as pictorial. The lower parts 今 and 必 are explained as phonetics.

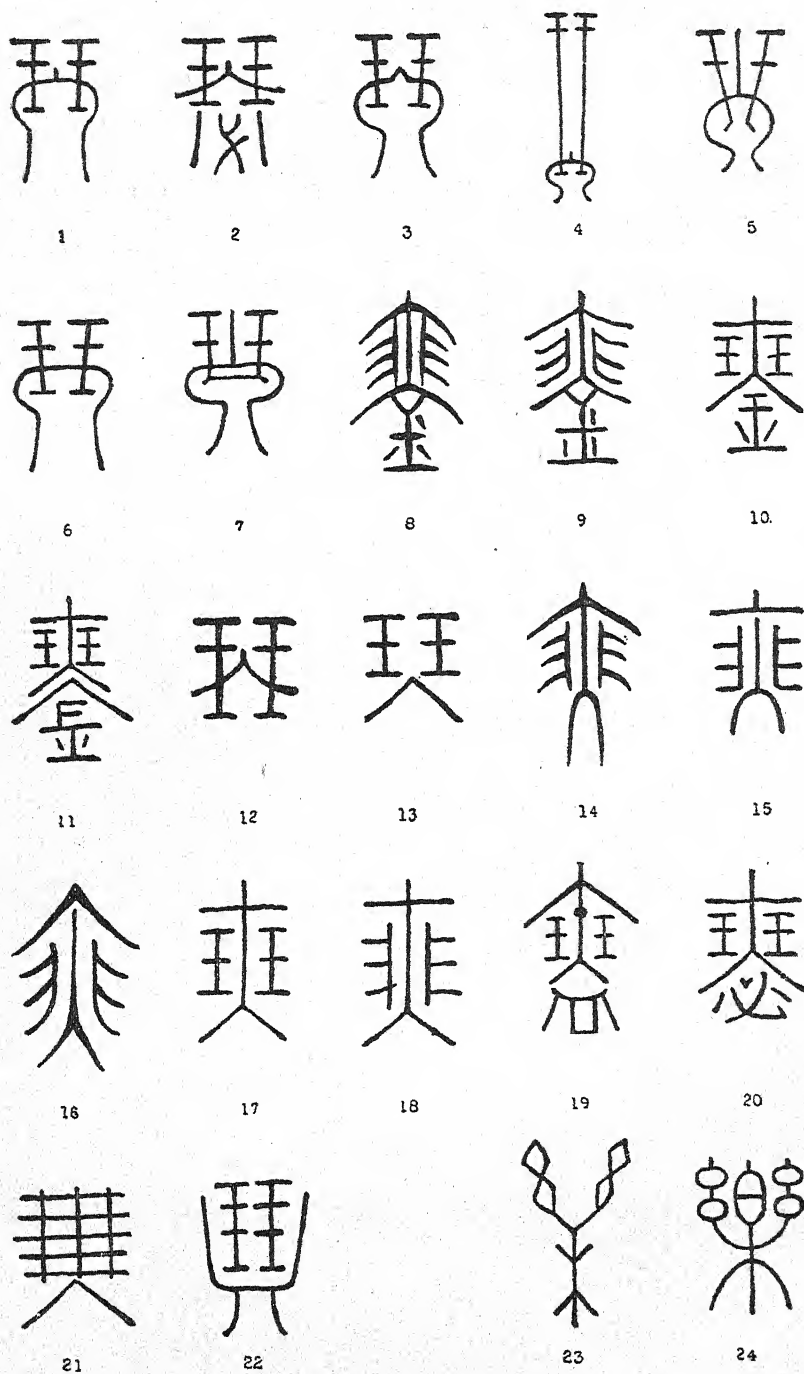
These modern forms are derived from the shapes the characters show in the 'small' seal script (*hsiao-chuan* 小篆); these forms I reproduce on figure V, No. 1: *ch'in*, No. 2: *sê*. The small seal was drawn up in 213 B.C. by Li Ssû 李斯, the minister of the First Emperor, Ch'in-shih-huang-ti, notorious for his burning of the books.<sup>13</sup> About

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*hsien-lei-chêng* 國朝耆獻類徵, ch. 422) published a book called *Lü-yin-wei-k'ao* 律音彙考, in which he tries to fix the orchestral music for a great number of ancient ceremonial songs. He devotes a detailed discussion to the *sê*, which had an important function in the ceremonial music at district feasts and archery contests (cf. *I-li* 儀禮, ch. Hsiang-shê-li 鄉射禮). His observations are based on a careful investigation of the correct dimensions and tunings of instruments according to the standards of the Chou period.

In 1923 Yang Tsung-chi published a *Ch'in-sê-ho-pu* 琴瑟合譜 as a part of his *Ch'in-hsiieh-ts'ung-shu* (cf. Appendix II, 7); he examines various systems for playing and tuning the *sê*, and gives, with annotations, some tunes to be played by a duo of Lute and *sê*. I regret that having no *sê* in my collection, and my spare time in which to pursue these studies being limited, I have not yet had any chance to verify the theories set forth in the latter two books. It is not sufficient to work out the theories of the authors; one should make practical experiments. What looks perfectly all right on paper often proves to be quite wrong when applied in practice. As both books are the results of serious studies, I recommend them for a closer investigation.

13) An excellent critical summary of occidental discussions of the old forms of the Chinese script is to be found in Franke, *Geschichte des Chinesischen Reiches*, vol. III, p. 137-138; cf. also the recent publication by D. Bodde, *China's First Unifier* (Leyden 1938), the chapter on the unification of writing.

V Old forms of the characters for *ch'in* and *se*.

100 A.D. these characters were collected and recorded by the famous scholar Hsü Chên 許慎, in his epoch-making dictionary *Shuo-wên* 說文. Although Li Ssû took as his basis the old characters which he found, he modified them to a considerable degree, so that this writing, as Karlgren observes, 'to a very large extent was an entirely new script'.<sup>14)</sup> The *Shuo-wên* again is separated by more than 300 years from the time of Li Ssû, and during that interval several modifications were introduced, as is shown by the study of inscriptions on stone from the early Han period. During later dynasties the *Shuo-wên* was published in numerous editions, and lengthy commentaries were added, the standard one being the edition by Tuan Yü-tsai (段玉裁 style: Jo-ying 若膺, 1735-1815).

The rudimentary text of Hsü Chên was faithfully reprinted, but with regard to the reproduction of the sealscript various editors introduced all sorts of modifications mostly motivated by calligraphic considerations.<sup>15)</sup> We must not forget that the sealscript became a branch of calligraphy, and that consequently several styles for writing these characters exist. Thus there are hardly any two editions of the *Shuo-wên* which give exactly the same seal form of a character. For this reason I have reproduced five different forms of the character ch'in (ill. V, No. 3-7), taken from various editions. As will be seen from these, however, the essential parts of the character were in this case left unchanged.

In the *Shuo-wên* the character for ch'in is made into a separate heading, and also the character for sê is classified thereunder.

Chinese palaeographers have gone to much trouble to explain these *Shuo-wên* forms. Generally they are of the opinion that the character for sê (No. 2) is a derivation from that for ch'in (No. 1). As regards No. 1, the consensus of opinion is that it must be taken as a pictorial ideograph, representing the shape of the Lute. A work of the Ming period, the *Liu-shu-ching-yün* 六書精蘊, preface dated 1567, says that this picture is made after the head of the Lute, seen from the side, showing the tuning pegs and the two knobs for fastening the strings; it follows the heading *chio* 珣, two jade tablets, because the tuning pegs were made of jade.

14) B. Karlgren, *Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*, p. 3.

15) Therefore for Chinese palaeographic studies it is advisable to consult as many different editions of the *Shuo-wên* as one can lay hands on. The labour involved is much reduced by the monumental work of Ting Fu-pao 丁福保, the *Shuo-wên-hsieh-tzu-ku-lin* 說文解字詁林, publ. Shanghai 1928; here under each character choice passages culled from 182 works on the *Shuo-wên* are reproduced in facsimile, permitting the reader to make comparisons and draw his own conclusions.

A work of the Ch'ing period, the *Shuo-wên-hsieh-tzû-chien* (說文解字箋, by Hsü Ching 徐影) gives the form shown in No. 4, and adds the remark that it is easy to see in this character a picture of the Lute seen from above: one has only to pull it out lengthwise! These are but mild examples. The Ch'ing scholar Wang Chün 王均 in his *Shuo-wên-shih-li* (說文釋例, publ. 1844, goes into more detail, and says that the picture was drawn after the bottom of the Lute. The curved line represents the shoulders of the Lute, the two lowest strokes of *chio* stand for the two knobs, the two perpendicular strokes represent the strings fastened to the knobs, and the four upper horizontal strokes stand, *mirabile dictu*, for the bridge which is seen on the *upper* side of the Lute. Other scholars again think that *chio* must be taken as a signific, meaning something precious, and indicating that the Lute is a precious instrument. Still others think that *chio* must be taken in its literal sense of 'tablets of jade': the curved line is a cord on which they are suspended. They assume that the Lute originally was a percussion instrument, something like the present day *pa-ta-la* 把打位, an instrument introduced from Burma (cf. *Ch'ing-hui-tien-t'u* 清會典圖). This interpretation is followed by Takata 高田 in his *Kochûhen* 古籀篇, who therefore does not give the character a separate heading but classifies it under *yü* 'jade'. Wieger, in his *Caractères Chinois*, p. 216, gives the same explanation.

I have quoted the above opinions to show that such speculations, being based entirely on the small seal characters, are valueless. In order to be able to make more likely guesses we have to go farther back than the small seal, and refer to the older forms, known by the convenient Chinese term *ku-wên* 古文, 'ancient shapes'. *Ku-wên* stands for all the old forms of characters dating from before Li Ssü's reorganisation of writing. They are taken from sacrificial vessels of the Chou period, inscriptions on bone, and various other archaeological remains.

No. 8 and 9 reproduce two *ku-wên* forms of the character for *ch'in*; the style of the strokes of No. 8 points to its being taken from an inscription on bronze. The upper part of these two characters shows clearly that the element later written as 珏, has nothing at all to do with jade, but forms part of an independent pictorial element. The lower part *chin* 金 is the phonetic. These two forms given here are apparently the prototype of the two variants of the modern character for *ch'in*, given in current editions of *K'ang-hsi-tzû-tien* 康熙字典 (cf. No. 10, 11). If we compare No. 8 and 9 with No. 13, which is another old form, I think we may agree with many commentators on the *Shuo-wên*, who assert that this form No. 13 is a simplification (*shêng-wên* 省文) of the complete type reproduced



in No. 8 and 9 : of the phonetic *chin* 金 only the upper part is taken over, which looks like *jén* 人. In the *li*-script (隸書) of the Han period this character was still further simplified by writing the element 人 not under, but over, the pictorial element ; cf. No. 12, form taken from an inscription on the tombstone of the Lute player Lu Chün (魯峻, died 172 A.D.). This is the form we recognize in the small seal character from which we started, reproduced in No. 1. Some scribe felt it necessary to add again a complete phonetic element, and chose 今 as an abbreviation for 金, 今 being originally the phonetic element of the character 金 ; for this modification there are many parallels, e.g. 淦, later written 汧. This is the type shown in the modern character 琴.

When we turn now to the character for *sê*, we observe that in the small seal (cf. ill. IV, No. 2) the character for *sê* is derived directly from the character for *ch'in*, by adding to the pictorial element a phonetic that later scribes represented as 必 : that this representation is very arbitrary is evident from phonetic reasons. How this phonetic element is constructed is difficult to say, as its seal form, which is taken over from the *ku-wên* script, cannot be identified with other phonetics. That it was a phonetic and not a pictorial element becomes evident when we turn to the *ku-wên* forms of the character for *sê*, reproduced in No. 14, 15 and 16 (17 and 18 are the forms as printed in current editions of *K'ang-hsi-tzû-tien*) : here the phonetic element is missing, and we see only a figure which can hardly be anything else than a pictorial representation. Now if we compare this *ku-wên* form for *sê*, No. 14-16, with the *ku-wên* form for *ch'in*, No. 8, 9 we find that the *ku-wên* for *sê* is exactly the same as the upper, pictorial part of the *ku-wên* character for *ch'in*.

Thus, while from the small seal forms of both characters we would assume that *sê* was a derivation from *ch'in* ('an instrument not unlike the *ch'in*, and called *sê*'), from the *ku-wên*, on the contrary, we would conclude that *ch'in* was derived from *sê* ('an instrument not unlike the *sê*, but called *ch'in*'). To make the problem still more complicated we also find *ku-wên* forms for *sê*, which show under the pictorial element the enigmatic phonetic which we find in the small seal (cf. No. 19, 20). Chinese commentators go not farther than to state that apparently in ancient times there existed a constant interchange between the two characters.

In my opinion we can go one step further : this interchange of the forms for *ch'in* and *sê* admits of but one conclusion, viz. *that originally there was but one character*, resembling the upper part of the *ku-wên* forms of *ch'in* (and occasionally of *sê*), which was neither *ch'in* nor *sê*,

but some archaic Chinese stringed musical instrument. This instrument was used together with the drums, bells, sonorous stones and flutes of the ritual orchestra, and also as a solo instrument. From a musical point of view these two functions are essentially different: whilst the orchestral instrument had only to produce music that was simple, but of strong volume (not to be drowned by the loud sounds of the percussion instruments), the solo instrument on the contrary was meant to be played alone, or as an accompaniment for the human voice. Thus it was not necessary that the solo instrument should produce a great volume of sound, but on the other hand it had to answer much more complicated musical needs. The orchestral and the solo instrument thus followed different ways of evolution: while the orchestral instrument remained almost unchanged, the solo instrument was gradually more and more developed in a technical sense. After some lapse of time the difference between the orchestral and the solo varieties of this instrument became so great that the necessity was felt for a distinctive nomenclature. This having been established, the pictorial character was not sufficient for indicating which instrument was meant, so phonetics were added. That this was done so irregularly must be due to the scribes, who no longer knew that both characters were originally the same, and considered one a derivation of the other.

Finally there remains the question of how the pictorial character that represented the archaic instrument was constructed. On the basis of my experience with several Lute-like oriental instruments I may remark that the most striking aspect of such an oblong stringed instrument in a picture is to draw some horizontal lines indicating the strings, and cross these by some vertical lines indicating some sort of bridges,<sup>16)</sup> finally adding some element expressing the action of playing, or a stand to lay the instrument on. On the basis of this reasoning I drew the entirely

16) It seems probable that the thirteen *hui* are remnants of vertical lines, or possibly bridges. An old quotation, cited by Ch'ên Yang (陳陽, Sung period) in his *Ch'in-shêng-ching-wei* 琴聲經緯 seems to point in this direction: 'The Ancients said about the tones of the Lute, that they are divided into vertical and horizontal sounds' 古人之論琴聲有經有緯.

The seven strings pulled with the right hand only give the 'vertical' tones (緯 *wei*, literally *woof*), and the tones produced when the left hand presses a string down on the place indicated by one of the *hui* while the right hand pulls it, are called 'horizontal' (經 *ching*, literally *warp*). These terms could refer to the fact that the archaic Lute offered an image resembling the texture of a woven fabric, the seven strings being crossed vertically by thirteen lines or some sort of bridges. It might be worth while to investigate historically the terms for the thirteen studs 徽 and 𥵑, together with this word 緯. Phonetically all three belong together.

hypothetical character reproduced in No. 21. This hypothetical character may be compared with an old form of the character ch'in (No. 22) recorded in the *Fu-ku-pien* 復古編, by the scholar *Chang Yu* 張有 of the Sung dynasty. One might explain by technical reasons the fact that the horizontal lines are cut up, and the vertical lines stressed, it being easier to engrave a long vertical line than a horizontal one, as anybody knows who has tried his hand at carving Chinese seals.

The above digression on the oldest history of ch'in and sê is not more than a hypothesis. The only advantage it has over other explanations is that it seems less far fetched and a little more logical. Yet it has often appeared that historical truth runs counter to all logic, and explanations that seem far fetched sometimes prove to be true ones. So I give this hypothesis here for what it is worth: only one of many possibilities.

There remains one remark to be added. In the above discussions I have relied exclusively on the pictorial element of the ancient script, leaving the phonetic side of the question untouched. Though agreeing with the opinion that the study of Chinese epigraphical problems in general must include also the phonetic aspect,<sup>17)</sup> in this particular case I have refrained from doing so, since here it seems unlikely that it could shed some more light on the oldest history of Lute and sê. For the sake of convenience I have used throughout my discussion the names of both these instruments as they are at present pronounced in Peking. But in ancient Chinese ch'in must have been pronounced something like *k'iem*, and sê something like *shiêt*.

\* \* \*

Finally I have to add a few words on the place occupied by the Lute in the daily life of the Chinese.

The Lute has never been an instrument of the multitude, both theoretical and practical factors preventing it from ever becoming popular. The theoretical factor I have already referred to above in the quotation from Father Amiot: the Lute was reserved for a small class, its study 'belonging by right to those whose studies are concentrated on literature and wisdom,' i.e. the literati. And this does not only apply to

17) Recently again stressed by P. Boodberg in his important article *Remarks on the evolution of Archaic Chinese* (Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol. II, p. 329). With regard to ch'in and sê I would draw attention to the fact that since ancient times both words have been combined with an explanatory character, which at the same time roughly indicates their pronunciation, viz. ch'in is coupled with chin 禁 'restraining', and sê with sê 藹, meaning 'sparing'. Old literature gives many of these couples, like 音 and 飲, 笙 and 生, 德 and 得, 朔 and 蘇. It might be worth while to make a list of such couples, and investigate them phonetically.

the Ch'ien-lung period (1736-1795), during which the learned Father was writing, but also to the two thousand years preceding. Among the practical factors I may mention the paucity of competent teachers, the difficulty of the technique, the high price and the rarity of good instruments. So the Lute remained reserved for the small circle of the happy few, an exquisite treasure jealously guarded by the literati.

The Lute is one of the indispensable paraphernalia of the library of the Chinese scholar. In a country like China, where literature is held in so high an esteem, and where until recent years (1905) the only way to an official position was through the gate of the literary examinations, the library has a deeper meaning than anywhere else. It was the sanctum where the literatus passed the greater part of his life, writing and reading, firmly convinced that the outer world could give nothing that was not to be found described and analysed in choice language in the many volumes that were piled upon the shelves around him. The saying of the *Tao-tê-ching* 'Without going outdoors I know the world, without looking out of the window I see the Way of Heaven' (op. cit. ch. 47) might well be written as a motto over the door of each Chinese library.

In the course of time there was formed a fixed tradition regarding the library, which minutely described the things a literatus should always have near at hand. On his desk should lie the ink slab, a stick of ink on a special stand, a vase containing some thoughtfully chosen and well arranged flowers, an antique vessel to wash his writing brushes, a stand to lay the wet brush on, paper weights, seals etc. On a small table there should be a chess board, and on another an incense burner. In all available corners bookstands should be arranged, while the remaining parts of the walls should be covered with scrolls showing graceful lines of characters or a famous painting. And in a dry corner, far from the window and not reached by the rays of the sun, there should be hanging one or more Lutes.

The Lute, symbol of literary life, enhances by its very presence the special atmosphere of the library, and at the same time is an elegant ornament. Its graceful, slender shape is pleasing to the eye, and the deep colour of its lacquer and its charming patina harmonizes with the antique appearance of its surroundings. Its venerable age suggests the wisdom of the sages of bygone times, and is it not said that the scholar, though living in the present, should in his thoughts dwell with the Ancients? (Li-chi, ed. Couvreur, Ch. XXXVIII, 11)

Like the old bronze sacrificial vessels often found in the abode of the



scholar, the Lute is an object for appreciative study by cultured connoisseurs. For the bottom board of antique Lutes is covered with inscriptions and seals, engraved in its coat of lacquer.<sup>18)</sup> For instance the valuable Lute reproduced on fig. II, shows an inscription engraved by the famous philosopher Chu Hsi (朱熹, 1130-1200). Its special name is *Ping-ching* 冰磬, 'Icicle Sonorous Stone'; the inscription reads: 'The tone Kung corresponds to the tone Shang. The sonorous stones are tapped, the bells are struck. With calmed emotions nurturing one's nature, the music is harmonious and even. Written by Hui-wêng (literary name of Chu Hsi), in the ninth month, autumn 1187' 宮應商鳴, 擊玉藏金, 怡情養性, 中和且平, 淳熙丁未秋社日晦翁題. After the lapse of some time the lacquer of old Lutes shows tiny cracks (*tuan-wên* 斷文), by the shape of which connoisseurs fix the age and genuineness of antique specimens.

But the Lute is more than other antique objects, because it is at the same time a musical instrument. 'Of the most precious antiques none equals the Lute. Bronze tripods of the Hsia dynasty, and sacrificial vessels of the Shang period, old autographs and famous paintings, all these are valuable. But tripods and sacrificial vessels can only be displayed as decoration, they cannot be used. They cannot be compared with the Lute, which sings if its strings are touched, giving an impression of meeting the ancients in person, in the same room, and talking with them' (*Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu*, cf. Appendix II, No. 7, in the treatise *Ch'in-yü-man-lu* 琴餘漫錄: 古器中最可寶者, 莫如琴, 夏鼎商彝, 古書名畫, 非不貴也, 然鼎彝祇能陳設, 不適於用, 非若琴按弦則鳴, 如與古人晤談一室). These lines were written by a scholar who himself was an expert performer on the Lute. But this is an exception: even among the literati consummate Lute performers were always rare. The so-called requisites of the library became in large part mere conventions: the presence of a chess-board does not imply that the master of the library is a devotee of the Royal Game, nor does the presence of a Lute necessarily mean that he can actually play it.

A knowledge of the special system of thought belonging to the Lute is a part of the education of every literatus, but only a small number among them have mastered its music. Still it was considered a sign of elegant taste to express some well-known principles of ch'in ideology in a new form, or to extoll in a poem the special merits of a Lute one happened to possess—and could not play! A good example of a mass of literary productions centring round one famous Lute is the collection *Hsieh-ch'in-shih-wên-ch'ao* 謝琴詩文鈔, published in 1815 by Wu Ching-

18) For more details cf. Appendix III, *The Lute as an antique*.

ch'ao 吳景潮; one day he bought the favourite Lute of the well-known loyal Sung scholar Hsieh Fang-tê (謝枋得, 1226-1289). Literary friends and acquaintances composed essays and poems in praise of this Lute, and this collection, filling five volumes, was privately published by the happy owner of the instrument.

For his not playing a scholar might quote numerous elegant excuses. He might cite the old Taoist paradox that curiously resembles the famous line in Keats' Ode on a Grecian Urn: the unheard tones are the most beautiful. Or he might point to the great poet of the Chin period T'ao Ch'ien (陶潛, 372-427) who, according to tradition, had a Lute without strings or studs hanging on the wall, and who in one of his poems said: 'I have acquired the deeper significance of the Lute: why should I strive after the sound of the strings?' 但得琴中趣, 何勞弦上聲. This attitude, though it may be well founded from a philosophical point of view, discouraged scholars from aspiring to become accomplished performers on the Lute. Therefore this attitude was sharply criticised by real Lute players. It is said in the *Ch'in-sê-ho-pu* (cf. above): 'In the houses of the wealthy there may be sometimes seen Lutes hanging on the wall as a decoration, richly adorned with precious stones:<sup>19)</sup> but they are only meant to dazzle people's eyes. If one asks (the owner) about music, he stands dumbfounded, and does not know about what one might be speaking. Then there are also those perverted and vainglorious people who do not attach strings and tuning pegs to their Lutes, thus unjustly using the Master of the Five Willows (fancy name of T'ao Ch'ien), and hoping thus to conceal their own worthlessness: those people are especially ridiculous! 富家整飾或有琴懸諸壁間裝璜點綴, 亦不過輝人目而已, 詢其音律懵然不識爲何物, 更有矯情干譽而絃軫不備, 謬借五柳先生爲掩醜計, 尤可笑也 (ch. 1, p. 8).

Such protests by discerning connoisseurs of Lute music are rare: the great majority of the literati, if they played the Lute at all, contented themselves with being able to play only two or three of the simpler tunes or even but a few bars. The view stated by Ou-yang Hsiu (歐陽修, 1007-1072), the great scholar of the Sung dynasty, in his essay *The Three Lutes* (dated 1062), may be taken as representative of the general attitude of Chinese scholars to the Lute. He says: 'From my youth I did not relish vulgar music, but loved the sounds of the Lute. I particularly liked the tune *Flowing Streams*, in its simpler version. During my life I often was in distress, and I roved over the country from north to south. All the other tunes of the Lute I entirely forgot, only this one

19) For a discussion of such richly decorated Lutes refer to Appendix III, *The Lute as an antique*.

tune *Flowing Streams* remained in my memory during dream and sleep. Now I am old, and I play it only occasionally. For the rest I only know some smaller tunes ; yet this is sufficient for my own enjoyment. One need not know many tunes : in studying the Lute the most important point is to learn to find satisfaction in playing." 三琴記 (外集, ch. 14) 余自少不喜鄭衛, 獨愛琴聲, 尤愛小流水曲, 平生患難, 南北奔馳, 琴曲率皆廢忘, 獨流水一曲夢寢不忘, 今老矣, 猶時時能作之, 其他不過數小調, 弄足以自娛, 琴曲不必多, 學要于自適。

Notwithstanding the fact that the music of the Lute was transmitted only by a few masters scattered over the Empire, officially the instrument itself was held in universal respect. I have come across only very few books where the position of the Lute as the unique representative of the music of the ancients is challenged.<sup>20)</sup> Often, it is true, the Lute was used to accompany vulgar music. Occasionally one will see on a painting a scholar playing the Lute while a singing girl accompanies him on the four-stringed guitar or some other frivolous instrument. And, though playing the Lute should restrain all passions, Chinese novels and theatre pieces more than once mention a young scholar who by playing the Lute conquers the heart of his beloved (cf. e.g., the *Hsi-hsiang-chi* 西廂記, part II, act IV). But such misuse of the Lute, though doubtless frequent, was never officially approved.

During the latter half of the Ch'ing dynasty it appears that the Lute was played only in a few circles of musical scholars, some in Chekiang province, some in Fukien, others in Szuch'uan : a negligible minority when compared with the vast number of scholars who devoted themselves to literary pursuits, and brought fame to Ch'ing letters. Lute music, a drooping flower, too much sheltered in the dimness of the library, was gradually withering away. It grew to resemble too much the *chih* 芝 fungus, the agaric symbolizing longevity, dried specimens of which decorate the

20) For instance, a work on music in general, dating from the nineteenth century, called *Mien-ch'in-hsieh-hsieh-yüeh-lu* 眠琴榭學樂錄, by Shên Wên-ying 沈文榮. In ch. 4 he says that it is wrong to call the Lute the special instrument of the ancients, for it is not better than the p'i-p'a. Moreover the Lute has no less than five defects, inter alia its finger technique is so complicated that one cannot sing while playing, its tones are not pure, its rhythm is confused. Notwithstanding these statements, which must seem terrible heresy to the old-fashioned Lute connoisseur, this book contains a mass of valuable information, especially because the author discusses in detail also the tuning, finger technique and notation of some popular instruments like the yüeh-ch'in 月琴. I possess only a very fine manuscript copy of this book ; I do not know whether it was ever published.

Further I also refer to the *Hsüeh-chai-chan-pi* 學齋佔畢, by Shih Shêng-tsu (史繩祖, 13th century), where the second ch. starts with a discussion entitled 'The Sê comes before the Lute' 瑟先於琴 ; there the Lute is called inferior to the Sê, and also to the mouth-organ *shêng*.

desk of the scholar ; they are graceful to look at, but dry and lifeless.

Fortunately since the establishment of the Chinese Republic interest in Lute music has revived.<sup>21)</sup> Unhampered by the old exclusionist tendencies, the study of the Lute spread to broader circles. Younger Chinese scholars who have studied musicology abroad are investigating Lute music on modern scientific principles.<sup>22)</sup> Many pupils flock round the few old teachers, books and manuscripts on the Lute are eagerly sought for, and in the near future we may confidently look forward to a renaissance of Lute music in China.

Next to China the only other country where the Lute was played and studied is Japan.

Japanese tradition mentions as the father of Lute music in Japan a Chinese Ch'an priest, Shin-etsu (Chin. *Hsin-yüeh* 心越, better known by his literary name *Tôkô-senji* 東皐禪師, 1639-1695). Fleeing the troubles that marked the early years of the Ch'ing dynasty, he came to Japan (1677), and was invited to Mito by the feudal lord *Mitsukuni* (光圀, 1628-1700), a great patron of learning. Shin-etsu could play the Lute, and soon a great number of devoted pupils gathered round him. According to Japanese sources this was the beginning of Lute playing in Japan. For a discussion of the study of the Lute in Japan I refer to Appendix IV of this essay, *The Chinese Lute in Japan*.

Western scholars in several books on Chinese music in general have paid due attention to the Lute.<sup>23)</sup> In 1911 G. Soulié gave a general description of the Lute, devoting some space to a description of the way it is played.<sup>24)</sup> M. Courant discussed the instrument and its tuning in extenso,<sup>25)</sup> whilst L. Laloy dwelt more upon its significance.<sup>26)</sup>

21) How enthusiastically the Lute is still studied appears from the book *Hui-ch'ín-shih-chi* 會琴實紀, published in 1920 in one vol. by the well-known Lute player Yeh Chang-po (葉璋伯, called Hsi-ming 希明). This book is a collection of documents and pictures relating to a reunion of Lute experts, organised in 1919 by Mr. Yeh. In this book one also finds a list of about fifty contemporary Lute players, with their addresses. Further I refer also to R. Taki, *Ongaku-shiryô no chôsa*, in: *Tôhō-gakuhô* (Journal of Oriental Studies) Tokyo, July 1935, p. 254.

22) For instance Wang Kuang-ch'í 王光祈, who attempted to transcribe ch'ín notation with European symbols ; cf. his *Fan-i-ch'ín-pu-chih-yen-chiu* 翻譯琴譜之研究, Shanghai 1931. Also Chang Yu-ho 張友鶴, who in the Peking periodical *Yin-yüeh-tsa-chih* 音樂雜誌 published a series of articles on the Lute, entitled *Hsüeh-ch'ín-ch'ien-shuo* 學琴淺說, where several examples of Lute tunes transcribed in European notes are given (op. cit. Vol. I).

23) For a more complete list of references to the Lute in western literature cf. Appendix I.

24) G. Soulié, *La Musique en Chine*, cf. App. I, No. 3.

25) M. Courant, *Essai historique sur la musique classique des Chinois*, cf. App. I, No. 6.

26) L. Laloy, *La Musique Chinoise*, cf. App. I, No. 5.



The Lute, however, has occupied since ancient times so unique a position in Chinese musical life, and its special literature is so extensive, that I think it well deserves to be treated separately. For the Lute is the only instrument forming the center of a special system of thought ; it is the only instrument the playing of which has been considered from ancient times as a means for reaching enlightenment.

In the following pages I propose to discuss the ideology of the Lute, and its place in Chinese history, leaving aside as much as possible all questions directly relating to musical theory. I hope that some day a musicologist shall write a practical handbook for the Lute player. For the time being these pages may suffice as a general introduction. According to the Chinese tradition on the study of the Lute this is the correct order, for is it not said in the rules for the Lute player that one may not touch the strings of the Lute before its significance is clearly understood ?

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## CHAPTER THE SECOND

### CLASSICAL CONCEPTIONS OF MUSIC

Chinese classical conceptions of music, according to the Yüeh-chi—  
Twofold aspect of music, cosmological and political—Music belongs  
to Heaven, and corresponds to what is heavenly in man—It is a means  
for perfecting the government, and for improving the individual—  
Music as a source for pleasure not recognized.

The ideology of the Lute is a separate system of thought, which was gradually evolved in the course of the many centuries that the Way of the Lute was cherished and cultivated by the literati. Various factors promoted the establishment of this ideology, and manifold influences determined its evolution. In the following chapters I shall endeavour to give a sketch of this development. As the rules of ch'in ideology were never assembled and canonized in one basic text, we shall have to collect our data from various literary sources, and with these materials on hand, try to form for ourselves a more complete picture of the system.

Before embarking upon this rather complicated task, we first must obtain an idea of Chinese conceptions of music in general. Fortunately there exists a special text, which gives a good survey of the classical conceptions. This is the *Yüeh-chi* 樂記, 'Annotations on Music' a part of the *Li-chi* 禮記, usually called 'Book of Rites', one of the classics of the Confucianist school. The *Li-chi* was composed at a comparatively late date, viz. about the beginning of our era. The *Yüeh-chi* was drawn up by the scholar Ma Yung (馬融, style Chi-ch'ang 季長, 79-166). Yet a comparison with older data, such as passages relating to music scattered in the works of the various philosophers that flourished in the latter part of the Chou dynasty, shows clearly that although the formulation of the *Yüeh-chi* is late, the ideas which it contains are elaborations of considerably older conceptions. But the materials are cast in a Confucianist form, and as such this text is authoritative for literary musical ideals. As moreover in Chinese literature it remained until quite recently the standard text on music, extensively quoted in nearly all later books on music or musical theory, I think we may well take this text as basis for our discussions of Chinese music in general.<sup>27)</sup>

27) For musical materials of a more archaic character I may refer to a work of Taoist colouring dating from the 3rd century B.C., the *Annals of Spring and Autumn of Lü Pu-wei* 呂氏春秋. In ch. V are embodied four sections on music, especially important because they quote ancient myths, indicating the role of music in archaic totemistic

This treatise contains a great variety of information, not only on the significance of music, but also on the ceremonial orchestra, and the ritual dances that were executed to its music. Statements on the meaning of music is general are scattered throughout the work ; I shall try to arrange the most important references of this kind more systematically and discuss them in order.

The significance of music appears to be twofold, depending on whether it is viewed in its universal, cosmological and superhuman aspect, or, on the other hand, in its specialized, political, human aspect.

In its universal aspect music is the harmony inherent in all nature, embracing heaven and earth. In its specialized aspect it is applied to man, both as an individual and as a member of the political unity, the State.

In the *Yüeh-chi* both the universal and the specialized aspects of music are discussed extensively. As this text belongs to the Confucianist school, however, it is only natural that the latter aspect is stressed.

Throughout this treatise music is considered as inseparable from rites, *li* 禮 : both are indispensable to the proper government of the State. In more than one passage, however, it is pointed out that music is superior to rites, mainly because music consists of heavenly harmony, rites of earthly harmony. "Music is the harmony of heaven and earth, rites constitute the graduation of heaven and earth. Through harmony all things are brought forth, through graduation all things are properly classified. Music comes from heaven, rites are modelled after earthly designs."<sup>28)</sup> "Music aims at harmony, it belongs to the higher spiritual agencies, and it follows heaven. Rites aim at the distinction of differences, they belong to the lower spiritual agencies, and follow earth. Therefore the Holy Sages composed music in order that it might correspond to Heaven, and they instituted rites so that they might correspond to Earth. When Rites and Music are manifest and perfect, Heaven and Earth will be regulated."<sup>29)</sup>

Music and man are closely connected, because music corresponds to what is Heavenly in man. "When man is born he is serene : this is the nature of Heaven. Experiencing contact with outer things, he is moved,

ceremonies. This book has been translated by R. Wilhelm : *Frühling und Herbst des Lü Bu-wei*, Jena 1928. Further I may refer to the works of the philosopher Huai-nan-tzû ; cf. L. Laloy's discussion in *T'oung-pao*, May 1913, p. 291-298.

28) Op. cit., chapter I, paragraph 23 : 樂者天地之和也，禮者天地之序也，和故百物皆化，序所群物皆別，樂由天作，禮以地制。

29) Op. cit., chapter I, par. 29 : 樂者敦和率神而從天，禮者別宜居鬼而從地，故聖人作樂以應天，制禮以配地，禮樂明備，天地官矣。



and in his nature desire is created. . . . If man cannot regulate his likes and his dislikes, the outer things will lead him astray, he will grow incapable of introspection, and the Heavenly nature in him disappears".<sup>30)</sup> "For this reason the Kings of olden times instituted Rites and Music in order to regulate human emotions."<sup>31)</sup> "Music points to what all beings have in common ; rites point to that in which all beings differ. What is common leads to mutual love, what is different leads to mutual respect".<sup>32)</sup> "Music is based on the inner life of man, rites on outer appearances. Music comes from within, therefore it is serene ; rites come from without, therefore they are elegant."<sup>33)</sup>

As music is a direct manifestation of Heaven, the wise ruler shall utilize it to assist him in governing the State properly. "In Music the Holy Sages took delight, because music can improve the heart of the people. Music has a profound influence on man, it can improve customs and ameliorate morals. Therefore the Kings of olden times promoted the teaching of music."<sup>34)</sup> "Therefore, when music flourishes, human relations are clarified, eyes and ears are made more susceptible, body and mind are in balanced harmony, good customs prosper and morals are improved, and peace reigns everywhere under Heaven."<sup>35)</sup>

Thus music appears as a means for transferring the Heaven-inspired virtues of the Wise Ruler to his subjects.

"Music is formed in the heart. Tones are the shape in which music is expressed. Elegance and rhythm are the decoration of the tones. The Superior Man takes the feelings in his heart as basis, he gives them shape in music, and then he gives this music its final form."<sup>36)</sup> But, in performing, because of this deep meaning of music, stress should not be laid on superficial beauty of melody and specious notes : above all the spiritual, the transcendental significance of music must be made manifest. "The greatness of music lies not in perfection of tone"<sup>37)</sup>; for : "(In rites and music) Virtue is more than Art".<sup>38)</sup>

30) Op. cit., ch. I, par. 11 : 人生而靜，天之性也，感於物而動，性之欲也……好惡無節於內，知誘於外，不能反躬，天理滅矣。

31) Op. cit., ch. I, par. 13 : 是故先王之制禮樂，人為之節。

32) Op. cit., ch. I, par. 15 : 樂者為同，禮者為異，同則相親，異則相敬。

33) Op. cit., ch. I, par. 17 : 樂由中出，禮自外作，樂由中出，故靜，禮自外作，故文。

34) Op. cit., ch. II, par. 7 : 樂也者，聖人之所樂也，而可以善民心，其感人深，其移風易俗，故先王著其教焉。

35) Op. cit., ch. II, par. 8 : 故樂行而倫清，耳目聰明，血氣和平，移風易俗，天下皆寧。

36) Op. cit., ch. II, par. 23 : 樂者心之動也，聲者，樂之象也，文采節奏聲之飾也，君子動其本，樂其象，然後治其飾。

37) Op. cit., ch. I, par. 9 : 是故樂之隆非極音也。

38) Op. cit., ch. III, par. 5 : 是故德成而上，藝成而下。

This principle was already recognised by the Ancient Rulers: "The Kings of olden times instituted Rites and Music, not to satisfy the mouths and stomachs, the ears and eyes, but in order to teach the people to balance their likes and dislikes, and to bring them back to the Right Way".<sup>39)</sup>

Besides stating these lofty views on the general meaning of music—music in the Universe and music in the State—the *Yüeh-chi* also devotes several lines to the meaning of music to the individual. "A wise man has said: 'Not for one single moment may one separate oneself from Rites and Music.' When one perfects oneself in music with the aim of regulating the heart, then as a matter of course the heart shall be calm, straight, tender and pure."<sup>40)</sup> "Therefore, during a musical performance in the Temple of the Ancestors, Prince and statesman, high and low listen together, and an atmosphere of harmony and respect prevails. During a musical performance on the occasion of clan festivals or village festivals, old and young listen together, and an atmosphere of harmony and compliance prevails. During a musical performance in the household, parents and children, elder and younger brothers listen together, and an atmosphere of harmony and affection prevails."<sup>41)</sup>

And finally I may quote a passage describing the attitude towards music of the Chün-tzû, the ideal man of the Confucianist school: "The Superior Man returns to his original heavenly nature, and thereto he conforms his thoughts. He distinguishes between good and bad, and in accordance therewith regulates his conduct. He does not perceive lewd sounds or indecent spectacles, he keeps his heart undefiled by lascivious music or unbecoming rites. His body is free from laziness and negligence, falsehood and depravity. He makes his ears and eyes, nose and mouth, all the functions of perception of his entire body conform to what is right, and so achieves righteous conduct. Then he expresses his sentiments in chant: he accompanies them on Lute and sê, moves the shield and the axe, and uses as decoration the pheasant-feathers and the ox tails, and finally he lets the flutes sound. The splendour of complete virtue makes the four seasons revolve in harmony, and establishes the right order of all things."<sup>42)</sup>

39) Op. cit., ch. I, par. 10: 是故先王之制禮樂也，非以極口腹耳目之欲也，將以教民平好惡而反人道之正也。

40) Op. cit., ch. III, par. 23: 君子曰，禮樂不可斯須去身，致樂以治心，則易直子諒之心油然而生矣。

41) Op. cit., ch. III, par. 28: 是故樂在宗廟之中，君臣上下同聽之，則莫不和敬，在族長鄉里之中，長幼同聽之，則莫不和順，在閭門之內，父子兄弟同聽之，則莫不和親。

42) Op. cit., ch. II, par. 15-16: 是故君子反情，以和其志，比類以成其行，姦聲亂色不留聰明，淫樂慝禮不接心術，惰慢邪僻之氣不設於身體，使耳目鼻口心知百體，皆由順正以行其義，然家發以聲音，而文以琴瑟，動以干戚，飾以羽旄，從以蕭管，奮至德之光，動四氣之和，以著萬物之理。

From the above quotations it will be clear that according to classical ideas there is but one sort of music deserving that name : that of the ceremonial orchestra. Its music and its dances are not meant for relaxation and for diversion, they are sacred institutions, established by the Holy Kings of old for the purpose of regulating the State and perfecting the individual. As for solo instruments, they are only recognised as music when they have also a function in the ceremonial orchestra, like the Lute and sê.

In the well-governed Confucianist state music meant for pleasure does not exist. Occasionally, when the government is decaying, and the end of a state is approaching, there will arise tones not conforming with these high musical principles. But this music is usually not referred to as such, it is called ' lewd notes ' or ' vulgar sounds ' ; these incite people to depravity, confuse the proper relations between men and women, ruler and subject, and sap the foundations of the State. They have nothing to do with what is called Music.

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## CHAPTER THE THIRD

### STUDY OF THE LUTE

#### 1. SOURCES

More materials on the significance of the Lute than on Lute music—Three groups of materials: 1. Scattered references to the Lute, 2. Special treatises on the Lute, and 3. Ch'in-pu, Handbooks for the Lute—Reasons for the rarity of ch'in-pu—Their contents—Recent Chinese books on the study of the Lute.

It must be considered fortunate, at least for the subject of this essay, that materials for investigating the ideology of the Lute are more extensive and reach much farther back in history than those for studying Lute music itself.

To illustrate this I may mention the fact that whereas the oldest ch'in-tune preserved in notation<sup>43</sup>) dates from the T'ang period (618-907), references to the significance of the Lute may be found already in the old Classical Books. And while the earliest printed handbooks for the Lute date from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), essays on the meaning of the Lute date from the beginning of our era.

Thus for the study of ch'in ideology we have rich materials at our disposal. For the sake of convenience I shall divide them into three groups.

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43) The tune preserved is the fifth chapter of a well-known old Chinese melody, called *Yu-lan* 幽蘭 "The Orchid in the Profound Vale", and was found in Japan. This text is especially important, because it gives not the ordinary notation in abbreviated characters *ch'ien-tzu* (v. supra p. 4, 5), but uses an apparently older system, where as a rule every movement is described in full. It was copied out by the famous Japanese Confucianist Ogiu Sorai (荻生徂徠, 1666-1728, other name Mononobe Mokei 物部茂卿), after a T'ang manuscript, allegedly reproducing a text from the Sui period, dated 590. When the Chinese scholar and bibliophile Yang Shou-ching (楊守敬, 1835-1915) stayed in Japan 1880-1884, and searched everywhere for old Chinese books and manuscripts, he also purchased a copy of this manuscript. It was reprinted in the *Ku-i-ts'ung-shu* (古逸叢書, cf. Pelliot, *Notes de Bibliographie chinoise*, BEFEO vol. II, page 315); in 1911 it was again reprinted by Yang Tsung-chi (see below) in his *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu*, who endeavoured to transcribe the tune in the usual ch'in notation. In the same *ts'ung-shu* Yang Tsung-chi reprinted an article on this tune by Li Chi 李濟. It would appear that the prolix method of notation used in this manuscript represents an early stage of the system. Still I hesitate to attach much value to this text for a study of the development of ch'in annotation. Ogiu Sorai's manuscript was copied out again and again. I recently purchased an old copy, with Japanese commentaries and explanatory illustrations. The question arises whether Ogiu Sorai faithfully followed the Chinese original, or whether he wrote out in full a manuscript originally in *ch'ien-tzu*, for his own purposes.



In the first place there are materials of a more or less casual nature, to be found in all kinds of books on various subjects. The oldest references occur in the Classical Books, mentioned above. The writings of the philosophers of various schools that flourished about 300 B.C. also often contain valuable materials on the significance of the Lute. I mention especially Huai-nan-tzû 淮南子 and Lü Pu-wei 呂不韋 (see above). The former so often uses musical conceptions to illustrate his ideas, that he might well be called the "musical philosopher". Further in historical and encyclopaedic compilations stories about famous Lute players are often related; such anecdotes indirectly shed much light on ancient Chinese conceptions of the Lute.

Secondly there were also composed special treatises on the Lute. The oldest that has been preserved seems to be the *Ch'in-ch'ing-ying* 琴清英, by the Confucianist philosopher Yang Hsiung (揚雄, 53 B.C.-18 A.D.). During the Han dynasty there were written several of such books on the Lute: the bibliographical section of the History of the Han Dynasty mentions four,<sup>44)</sup> that of the Sui period seven items. Unfortunately these books are all lost, and were so already in the Sung-dynasty.<sup>45)</sup> We still have, however, scores of books on the Lute dating from the end of the Han to the beginning of the Ming period. And thereafter the literature on the Lute increases rapidly: not only were there published a great number of special books on the Lute, but also works on music in general devote entire chapters to the Lute and its connotations. The mass of this literature is so vast that one can hardly hope to survey it all.

Thirdly there are the so-called *ch'in-pu* 琴譜, handbooks for the Lute player. Since because of their rarity these are the least known, I shall describe this category here more fully.

Although hundreds of *ch'in-pu* have been published since the beginning of the Ming dynasty, most of them are difficult to obtain. A collector of the 19th century observes: 'The so-called handbooks of the Lute are not very much sought after by bibliophiles: they content themselves with just collecting a few items, so as to have also this sort of book represented on their shelves. As bookshops cannot sell them at a high

44) *Han-shu-i-wên-chih* 漢書藝文志, by Pan Ku (班固 32-92 A.D.). Some of the items mentioned here may have contained some sort of notation. I mention: *Ya-ch'in-chao-shih-ch'i-p'ien* 雅琴趙氏七篇 "Compositions for the Solo Lute, by Mr. Chao, 7 parts", with the remark added: Tunes that were played by Wei Hsiang, minister under the Emperor Hsüan (73-49 B.C.) 宣帝時丞相魏相所奏. Another commentator adds that Chao and some other authors of similar treatises were granted an audience by the Emperor, and played the Lute in the august presence.

45) Cf. *Ch'in-shih* 琴史, the passage quoted on p. 54 below.



price, they do not value them much ; as moreover these books were very rarely reprinted, they were easily lost. During eighteen years I was able to collect only 41 specimens, which were bought by me or presented to me by my friends'.<sup>46)</sup> I may add to this that generally ch'in-pu were published in very limited editions, printed from badly cut wood blocks, and on inferior paper. The reason for this state of affairs is that they were usually published by Lute teachers, for the use of their pupils. So the printing and editing were done as cheaply as possible, and only a small number of copies was made. An exception is formed by those ch'in-pu that were published by scholars of name and high official standing, who could afford to have a handbook published without regard to the cost.

For the present subject, the study of the ideology of the Lute, the latter class is the more important, because the authors had a wide knowledge of the literature on the subject, and could easily express their thoughts in writing. It goes without saying, however, that from a purely musical point of view, the value of a ch'in-pu rests entirely in the quality of the tunes given in notation : this depends upon the musical gifts of the editor, and has nothing to do with his scholarship. Often the most enticing melodies will be found in the cheapest editions.

Of course melodies in notation form the main part of a ch'in-pu.<sup>47)</sup> But apart from that they contain introductory chapters, and it is here that the principles of ch'in ideology are to be found.

The contents of a ch'in-pu are generally arranged according to one fixed model. As is usually the case with Chinese books, they open with one or more prefaces, by the author and his pupils or friends, and thereafter give the *fan-li* 凡例, or 'Introductory notes.' The prefaces are important, because they not only furnish the reader with biographical details about the author and his circle of musical friends, but because they also often mention where he obtained the versions of the tunes given in

46) Cf. *T'ien-wên-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng* (v. Appendix II, 17), vol. I: 琴譜參考. 琴譜一書, 藏書家不甚購求, 隨收數種以備一類, 書坊店無善價可售, 故亦不重之, 而此書又少翻刻, 故最易亡滅, 余至今十有八年, 所購及諸公所贈止此四十一種. At present nearly all early Ming handbooks are rare, and often known to exist only in two or three copies. If one is lucky enough to find one, it is usually either incomplete, or else fetches a prohibitive price. During the last four years I have combed the bookshops in China and Japan for ch'in-pu, and copied out some very rare specimens in libraries. But still I have not yet been able to obtain many Ming ch'in-pu mentioned in old catalogues, and I fear that some are irrecoverably lost.

47) The only exception is the *Yü-ku-chai-ch'in-pu* 與古齋琴譜, published in 1855 by Chu Fêng-chieh 祝鳳喈 ; in this ch'in-pu not a single tune is given, the whole book being filled with minute directions for building Lutes, and with discussions on the theory of Lute music.

his book. In the *fan-li* the author often states his views on the significance of the Lute and its music.

Then follow chapters on the history of the Lute ; names of famous instruments are enumerated, sometimes accompanied by drawings showing their various shapes, and reproducing their inscriptions. Often there are also inserted some practical discussions as to how Lutes should be built, how the strings should be made, etc. Then come rules defining what might be called the discipline of the Lute player : where and to whom the Lute may be played, in what costume etc. ; I shall discuss these rules in detail in the third section of this chapter. Also explanations of the technical terminology are given, and suggestions as to how Lutes should be stored away, how to repair them, and how to make the table on which the Lute is laid. Lists of tunes, of famous Lute players, and of Lute builders of succeeding dynasties are also added.

Thereafter come lengthy dissertations on the musical theory of the Lute. Sometimes they confine themselves to the practical aspects, as fixing the correct tuning and the various modes, at other times they loose themselves in abstruse speculations on the absolute pitch and the correct dimensions of the twelve sonorous tubes.<sup>48)</sup> In these pages I do not quote from this part of the *ch'in-pu*, since it contains no information on the ideology peculiar to the Lute.

Of greater importance to our present subject is the section on the significance of the tones : each tone has its special association, and should evoke a certain emotion. Below I devote a special chapter to this question (Chapter V, 2 : Symbolism of Tones).

Finally there comes a special chapter on the finger technique, and the system of annotation used in describing this technique. This chapter is called *chih-fa* 指法, and it forms, so to say, the key to the handbook, for without it the player would find in the notation of the tunes many obscure passages, since editors often use all kinds of variants of the signs of the *chien-tzu* system. Unfortunately this chapter has often been torn out, to prevent the handbook from being used by unqualified people. The best edited *ch'in-pu* illustrate these directions regarding the finger technique with drawings of the correct positions of the hand, sometimes further explained by symbolical pictures. For a discussion of these see

48) *Ch'in-sê-ho-pu* (cf. above p. 8) very justly observes that the greatest musical theoreticians are usually not the best musicians : ' In ancient times the people who excelled in playing the Lute did not bother themselves (ni, cf. *Lun-yü* xix, 4) with the laws of musical theory ; those who did so were not good performers on the Lute ' 凡例, 12 : 古之善鼓琴者必不泥於律呂, 泥律呂者必不善於鼓琴。

below, Chapter V, 3 : Symbolism of the Finger technique.

In addition to these introductory chapters the main body of a ch'in-pu—the tunes in notation—also contains materials for studying the ideology of the Lute. The tunes are accompanied by prefaces, colophons and commentaries, which give the name of the composer, and explain the meaning of the tune : sometimes they even go so far as to explain the special significance of each part of a tune, and of each bar. In chapter IV : The Significance of the Tunes, I shall often have to refer to these remarks added to the tunes.

These handbooks of the Lute differ considerably in quality. Not only does the make-up vary, as mentioned above, but also the quality of the contents. Generally speaking they may be divided into two groups which I propose to call *basic* and *secondary*. In the first group I would classify that small number of ch'in-pu that combine well-written and logically arranged introductory chapters, with original and carefully edited versions of the tunes. As one wrong stroke in the notation will cause a tremendous confusion, the verifying of the characters (of the cut blocks), Chin. *hsiao-tzu* 校字, with regard to the ch'in-pu is even more important than with ordinary books, where a wrong character may usually at a glance be detected by referring to the context. Already an author of the Ming dynasty complains of the many mistakes in the notation of the ch'in-pu. He says : 'Those who excelled among the Lute masters transmitted (the doctrine of) the Lute and the handbooks. Thus the compiling of the handbooks rested with the Lute masters. Still there are mistaken ones : if one stroke is wrong, then the finger technique fails because of this false tradition. And if this false tradition continues for a long time, the mistakes cannot be corrected any longer, and the true spirit of the Lute melodies is lost' 琴譜取正。琴師之善者傳琴傳譜，而書譜之法在琴師亦有訛者，一畫之失指法即錯以訛傳，訛久不可正，琴調則失真矣 (cf. Appendix II, No. 4, *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien*). Many ch'in-pu boast in their prefaces that not a single stroke or dot in the notations is wrong, but those that measure up to this standard are rare.

The majority of the ch'in-pu still extant belong to the secondary group : their introductory chapters are a medley of passages taken from the basic handbooks and various other sources, clumsily patched together. The tunes given in notation are copied after those of the basic handbooks, with but few alterations. But even the editors of these secondary ch'in-pu often added some new materials of their own : a new way of expressing rhythm, adding ordinary notes to the *chien-tzu*, etc. Cases of absolute plagiarism are rare ; I have so far been able to discover

only one.<sup>49)</sup>

It is only since the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1911 that Chinese scholars have tried to collect and critically investigate these various materials on the Lute. I may mention here the work of two Lute players, who devoted many years to these studies.

In the first place Yang Tsung-chi (楊宗稷, style: Shih-po 什百) who died about ten years ago, having during a long time taught the Lute in Peking. He was an enthusiastic collector of rare ch'in-pu and antique Lutes, and, although not an eminent scholar or brilliant stylist, he still had had a suitable literary education. The result of his studies on the Lute and its literature are collected in his *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu*,<sup>50)</sup> which contains not less than 32 original treatises. Unfortunately he did not work according to a fixed plan, but, *more sinico*, he jumps from one subject to another, giving the most heterogeneous items of information under one and the same heading. As no index or detailed list of contents has been added, one has to work through the entire work in order to locate a passage. But notwithstanding these shortcomings it is a valuable book, as yet the only one that tries to treat all aspects of the study of the Lute.

His friend Chou Ch'ing-yün was a great collector of ch'in-pu, and he diligently studied their prefaces and colophons, comparing different editions of the same work. On the basis of what must have been a marvelous collection he compiled two books. In 1914 he published the *Ch'in-shu-ts'un-mu*,<sup>51)</sup> a *catalogue raisonné* of all ch'in-pu he either possessed himself, or the titles of which he found in old and new catalogues. These items are all arranged chronologically, and in many cases he reprints their prefaces. It is to be deplored, however, that he did not add to each item a note as to whether he had actually seen the book or not. Therefore it is not always possible to know whether or not he relies on secondary information. The famous bibliophile Miao Ch'üan-sun (繆荃孫, 1844-1919) wrote a preface. In 1917 he supplied these bibliographical materials with biographical data, publishing a *Ch'in-shih*,<sup>52)</sup> in which notes are given on the lives of famous editors of ch'in-pu and of Lute players; Yang Tsung-chi added a preface to this book.

49) Viz. the *Chiao-an-ch'in-pu* 蕉庵琴譜, published in 1877 by Ch'in Wei-han 秦維翰, where are given exactly the same versions as printed in the well-known *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu* (cf. Appendix II, 14). The editor has, however, made up for this to a certain extent, by giving in the introductory chapters a particularly good survey of the various tunings.

50) Cf. Appendix II, 7.

51) " " " 8.

52) " " " 9.



Notwithstanding their shortcomings these three books are indispensable works for the student of the Lute. The materials which the authors used are hardly obtainable in the libraries of Europe or America, and even in China and Japan most of the rare items are found together only in some private collections. Moreover all three books are on the market, and may be obtained from any bookseller in Peking.

For materials on the Lute in western books I may refer to Appendix I, while a description of the Chinese books on the Lute and of the ch'in-pu quoted in these pages may be found in Appendix II.

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## 2. ORIGINS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The establishment and evolution of ch'in ideology due chiefly to three factors : a. Confucianist (social), b. Taoist (religious), and c. psychological.—Buddhist influences : a Mantrayanic magic formula as Lute tune, a Lamaist hymn adapted to the Lute.—A summary of the history of ch'in ideology.

Ch'in ideology may be called a separate system in so far as every time that one meets the Lute in Chinese literature, it is found to be associated with a special system of thought.

In minor details this system is differently described by various authors, but its characteristic points remain the same. One would look, however, in vain for a special standard text, in which this system is clearly formulated, and its elements systematically arranged, so as to form a canon for the significance of the Lute.

Since early times there is found the term *ch'in-tao* 琴道, literally : the Way of the Lute, meaning : the inner significance of the Lute, and how to apply this in order to find in the Lute a means for reaching enlightenment. The literatus and Lute player Huan T'an (桓譚, lived about the beginning of our era) wrote a treatise entitled *Ch'in-tao* ; this title is registered in the *Yü-hai* 玉海, but it has not been preserved. This book may have been an attempt to give a summary of the principles of ch'in ideology. This term ch'in-tao might be translated as 'the doctrine of the Lute' ; but as we do not possess a special text where the principles of this doctrine are set forth, I think a vague term like 'ideology of the Lute' is the more suitable translation.

In the long course of its development ch'in ideology benefited by its lack of delimitation : because of the absence of a fundamental text, ch'in-tao was able to absorb a great wealth of various conceptions. Below I shall try to sketch an outline of this ideology, at the same time making an attempt to analyze the factors that caused its establishment, and influenced its further evolution.

In chapter II I discussed the classical conceptions of music in general, as expounded in the *Yüeh-chi*. We are not justified, however, in taking that discussion as a final basis when embarking upon an investigation of historical problems, although till recent days the *Yüeh-chi* was looked upon by Chinese scholars as having unquestionable authority. In order to be able to make a discreet use of this text, we shall first have to consider it critically.

Chinese historical records are unique in so far that they cover an unbroken line, reaching from high antiquity to the present day. But we must always bear in mind that the cement of this imposing edifice is formed by the continuity of the written language. And this literary language, although extremely flexible and highly expressive, is yet too much a special product of a limited circle, a comparatively small group of writers, all belonging to the same class and having a similar trend of thought, not to strain a correct representation of the actual facts. History was, until recently, a section of the vast field of Chinese letters: it was, like most other Chinese sciences, kneaded and remoulded until it became literature. This fact becomes evident when one tries to study some subject in its historical frame: when comparing archaeological and ethnological data with their descriptions as transmitted in literary documents, we cannot fail to realize that these describe life and its phenomena from a particular and narrow angle: the point of view of the literary class. We are constantly confronted with what might be called a revolving process, something like the following. A certain phenomenon is observed and recorded. This record is written in the highly polished literary idiom, and by this mere process of recording, the actual facts are already modified to some extent. In this form it finds its way into some book or essay. Other literati quote the passage, but before doing so they test it by literary traditions, and make the necessary alterations to harmonize it with these. Moreover they will link it up with some appropriate classical quotation, and add that this was the phenomenon as it has appeared since ancient times. Now, when after the lapse of some centuries of so, another observer finds this same phenomenon in actual life, before writing about it he consults the records drawn up by former observers, and finds these to be rather different from what he actually sees. But as a rule his reaction is not to question the correctness of these records, but on the contrary he will accept them as the absolute truth, and in connection with the present condition of the phenomenon he will sadly point out the decadence of the times, deploring that a phenomenon that formerly was in such perfect accordance with literary ideals has come to be so vulgar. And this process repeats itself any number of times, till the discrepancy between the actual phenomenon and its description becomes so wide that a later writer treats them as two entirely different things.

It goes without saying that this theoretical example is far too simplistic and general, and that real cases are infinitely more complicated. Further, as a rule, such a development applies especially to subjects lying

outside the direct domain of the literatus—which were many. Still I think it is as true as generalisations can be. It may serve as one explanation of the fact that in Chinese literature there is inherent what might be called a Paradisical complex: a tendency to reverse the natural course of the evolution of culture, to make it start with a summum of perfection, after which there is a steady decline. Of course there are numerous other and more potent factors underlying this tendency; factors based upon a trend of thought common to all human beings, and which explain the fact that this Paradisical complex occurs in many other civilisations. But in China the force of the literary tradition must certainly be counted as one of them.

When we consider the pronouncements of the *Yüeh-chi* in the light of the foregoing observations, it becomes evident that they are not to be taken as a faithful description of the opinion of the ancient Chinese on music in general. The views quoted are a production of literary tradition. For the literati ceremonial music was the apex of all music, and consequently they expected all other musical manifestations to be in accordance with these ideals. What deviated from this fixed canon had to be remoulded till it fitted in, then and then only could it be officially accepted. That this ceremonial music itself is in many respects an artificial production stands to reason. When the *Yüeh-chi* speaks of the music of the clan festivals, it depicts them as decorous celebrations, ignoring their origin. Comparative ethnology teaches us that the actual songs sung at clan festivals were far more archaic, though their meaning and portent was certainly not less deep or mystic than that of any classical text. The ancient terminology was maintained, but the interpretation was biased to the extent of giving a false representation of the real facts.

In some cases the materials that had to be remodeled by the literati set them some difficult problems. For instance the songs of the Book of Odes so clearly showed their original character of folksongs, that the literati needed all their ingenuity to force them into the classical mould. Some of them, the odes of Chêng and Wei (鄭, 衛, *Shih-ching*, Book VII and IX), ancient love-songs, they had to give up as being impossible to remould. Therefore the literati labelled them irrevocably with their *hic niger est*, and in Chinese literature they are, quite wrongly, always used to denote lewd and vulgar music. I need not discuss this question further here, since it has been analysed already by M. Granet in his pioneer researches on the Book of Odes.

Thus the conceptions of music as expounded in the *Yüeh-chi* did



not answer real conditions: neither the music at the court, nor the music of the people could pass the muster set by these literary standards. This is only natural, since music is a very human art, that develops spontaneously, unhampered by moral or philosophical considerations.

Even though we can hardly see conditions of the pre-Han period except through the documents drawn up and refashioned by the literati, indirect information definitely points to the fact that popular music, theoretically designed as the "lewd notes of Chêng"<sup>53</sup>, was much in favour at the court and among the populace. Prince Wên of Wei (426-387 B.C.) expressed his preference unequivocally when he said: 'When in full ceremonial dress I must listen to the Ancient Music, I think I shall fall asleep, but when I listen to the songs of Chêng and Wei, I never get tired'.<sup>54</sup> Thus in the period preceding the Han dynasty the Ceremonial Music was forced to the background by the ever-waxing influence of secular music. To use the words of the great historian Ssü-ma Ch'ien (司馬遷, born 145 B.C.): 'The right way of government decayed, and the music of Chêng (see above) prospered. The feudal lords and hereditary princes made their names famous in neighbouring states, and vied with each other in power. Since Confucius could not cope with the singing girls sent by Ch'i,<sup>55</sup> and had to give up his position in Lu, although retiring he rectified the music in order to lead people to the right path, he composed the Wu-chang music in order to criticise the trend of the times, but none heeded his counsels. The decay went on and in the period of the Six States the feudal lords indulged in dissipation and idleness. Then it was impossible for them to return to the right path, they lost their lives and their families were exterminated and all the states were unified under Ch'in' (史記, 樂書, 治道虧缺, 而鄭音興起, 封君世辟, 名顯隣州, 爭以相高, 自仲尼不能與齊優, 遂容於魯, 雖退正樂以誘世, 作五章以刺時, 猶莫之化, 陵遲以至六國, 流沔沈佚, 遂往不返, 卒於喪身滅宗, 并國於秦).

Official recognition of popular music came under the reign of Emperor Hui (惠帝, 194-188 B.C.), when a special bureau for this was establish-

53) Cf. *Lun-yü*, Book XV, ch. 10; Book XVII, ch. 18.

54) Cf. *Yüeh-chi*, cf. III, 6.

55) This incident is referred to in *Lun-yü*, Bk. XVII, ch. 4. Legge adds the note: 'In the 9th year of the duke Ting, Confucius reached the highest point of his official service. He effected in a few months a wonderful renovation of the state, and the neighbouring countries began to fear that under his administration Lu would overtop and subdue them all. To prevent this, the duke of Ch'i sent a present to Lu of fine horses and of 80 highly accomplished beauties. The sage was forgotten, government neglected. Confucius, indignant and sorrowful, withdrew from office, and, for a time, from the country too.'

ed. This bureau was called *yüeh-fu* 樂府, and its task was to collect and record popular songs. Later these songs themselves were also called *Yüeh-fu*. When the Emperor Wu (武帝, 140-87 B.C.) fixed the rites for the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth (chiao-ssü 郊祀), this bureau was reorganized, and considerably widened in scope. Well-known poets like Ssü-ma Hsiang-ju (司馬相如, 179-117 B.C.) and Li Yen-nien (李延年, second cent. B.C.) were ordered to investigate and correct the popular songs assembled, in order that charming melodies might be properly harmonized, and the accompanying texts polished, to make them more enjoyable for a cultivated and refined audience.

In later literature it is stated that the *Yüeh-fu* was instituted in order to choose and put on record such folksongs as were considered to be of an edifying and elevated character, to ameliorate the morals of the people. But in my opinion this is clearly the distorted point of view of the Confucianist school of thought. The original function of the *Yüeh-fu* was certainly not to restrain popular music, but on the contrary to encourage it, and to assemble as many gay songs fit for entertainment as possible. This is shown, e.g., by a passage from the Account of Rites and Music of the Han History 漢書禮樂志, where the endeavours of Emperor Ai (哀帝, 6-1 B.C.) to curb the rampancy of popular music are described; a commentator adds: 'Although the Emperor Ai stopped the songs of *Chêng* and *Wei*, and restricted the number of officials of the *Yüeh-fu*, he did not succeed in establishing elegant music on the basis of the Classics and the ancient rules' (哀帝雖有放罷鄭衛之言, 減樂府之員, 然不能據經做古制為雅樂). If the *Yüeh-fu* was intended to control popular music, the Emperor would have enlarged, and not restricted, the number of officials.

Equally abortive were the efforts at a reform in favour of music conforming to literary standards made by Ho-chien Hsien-wang 河間獻王 the son of the Han Emperor Ching (景帝, 156-141 B.C.). The growth of secular music was further encouraged when Central Asiatic music, the so-called *Hu-yüeh* 胡樂, became increasingly popular in China. The class of Palace Music called *Huang-mên-ku-ch'ui-yüeh* 黃門鼓吹樂, Music for entertaining the guests at Palace festivals and banquets, occupied a much more important place than Ceremonial Music, and its influence grew with every succeeding dynasty.

This light music reached its zenith during the Sui (590-618) and T'ang (618-907) periods.<sup>56)</sup> In those times it did not, however, any longer derive its inspiration from Chinese popular music: the *Yüeh-fu* genre

56) Cf. the fundamental study by K. Hayashi: *Sui-t'ang-yen-yüeh-tiao-yen-chiu* 林謙三, 隋唐燕樂調研究 Shanghai 1935; appeared only in Chinese.

had become a literary style, cultivated by scholars as an archaizing (ni-ku 擬古) sort of poetry, cut off from its living root, the folksong. Foreign modes and instruments prevailed, and an enormous amount of Indian and Central Asiatic music was adopted.<sup>57)</sup> And these foreign airs were not even in accordance with the twelve sonorous tubes, on which all Chinese musical theory has been based since times immemorial. We read in the Account of Music of the Liao History (遼史樂志): 'The 28 foreign modes are not fixed by means of the Chinese sonorous tubes,<sup>58)</sup> but by the strings of the p'i-p'a' 二十八調, 不用黍律, 以琵琶絃協之. Even songs belonging to a semi-popular, but essentially Chinese class of music, were reset on Central Asiatic modes.<sup>59)</sup>

When the highest social circles set such an example, it can be easily understood that the music that was heard in the streets and at social gatherings was still further removed from the literary standards fixed by tradition. Still it formed a part of the daily life of the literati and of the common people. We have but to read through essays and poems of the T'ang period to see how immensely popular this so-called 'vulgar' music was with the gay and pleasure-loving people of that time. Yet, when one leaves through the scores of voluminous works on music referring to that period, one finds involved speculations on the absolute pitch of the ground-note, and other abstruse questions of musical theory, but not a word about popular, let alone about foreign, music. For this music was contrary to established literary principles, and there was no recognized precedent for it; so it was simply ignored. This is one of the many cases where the records drawn up by the literati give a biased representation of the actual conditions.

Returning now to the *Yüeh-chi* we can, after the above discussions, state that already about 400 B.C., when these conceptions were formulated, they were neither in accordance with the conditions prevailing at the time, nor did they give a good idea of the situation during past centuries. Still less could they be applied to the evolution of music during subsequent dynasties. Notwithstanding this the *Yüeh-chi* was, and remained, the only standard text on music recognized by the literati, and

57) In the Account of Music in the dynastic history of the Sui period 隋書音樂志, we find the following amazing enumeration of seven musical departments instituted by the Emperor Yang (煬帝, 605-616): 國伎, 清商伎, 高麗伎, 天竺伎, 安國伎, 茲龜 (= 屈支) 伎, 文康伎.

58) 黍律 *shu-lü*; according to Chinese tradition the size of each of the twelve sonorous tubes was determined by the number of grains of millet it could contain; the basic tube *Huang-chung* should contain exactly 1200 grains.

59) Cf. the remarks of Hayashi (op. cit. p. 61) regarding *ch'ing-shang-yüeh* 清商樂.

thus by official historians.

This digression into the history of music in general was necessary, because in my opinion the discrepancy between actual musical conditions and the standard set by literary tradition was one of the factors that caused the creation of the ideology of the Lute, and strongly influenced its further evolution.

Although the literati ignored what they called 'vulgar' music in their learned musical dissertations, they were of course perfectly aware of its existence, and moreover liked it immensely. This is sufficiently shown by an inspection of the many old paintings which depict the life of the literary class: there one sees gatherings of literati, assembled on a beautiful spot in the open, and enlivened by a bevy of fair damsels, who play the three-stringed violin, the cither and a great variety of other instruments, all introduced from foreign countries. This popular music was in fact the only kind of music that the greater part of the literati could in reality hear. For the Ceremonial Music was only performed on special occasions, and for a limited audience. Yet, although known often only from books, the Ceremonial Music and literary musical standards had officially to be kept intact. For if popular music were allowed to invade also the sacred domain of literature, classical ideals might become endangered, and therewith the very foundations of the State.

It is here that the significance of the Lute becomes apparent: it was the only instrument that, although properly belonging to the ceremonial orchestra, and boasting of a venerable age, pure Chinese origin and constant association with the most holy Sages of Confucianism, could still be played in private life as a solo-instrument, and still demonstrate all the high musical ideals fixed by literary tradition.

Since ancient times notions that perfectly harmonize with classical ideals were associated with the Lute. For instance, in the Yüeh-chi it is said that music belongs to Heaven, and as such may assist man to regain his original heavenly nature. Now, as the philosopher Huai-nan-tzû observes, the Lute was created in mythical times to provide man with an instrument to regain his original serenity: 'to make man return to his divine origin, to restrain his low passions, and make him revert to his heavenly nature', 以歸神杜淫, 反其天心 (op. cit. 泰族訓). In the *Ch'in-tsao*<sup>60)</sup> this idea is formulated as follows: 'Fu-hsi made the Lute, whereby to restrain falsehood, to guard the heart against low desires, that man might be cultivated and his nature regulated, to make man return to what

60) Cf. Appendix II, 1.



is truly heavenly in him' 所以禦避僻, 防心淫, 以修身理性, 反其天真也。

Further, the *Yüeh-chi* says that music was used by the Ancient Sages to regulate the Realm. Now in the Book of History, in Huai-nan-tzû, and several other philosophical texts of the period, the following line is quoted: 'When Shun was Emperor, he played the five-stringed Lute, and sung the song Nan-fêng, and the Realm was regulated' 舜爲天子, 彈五絃之琴, 謠南風之詩而天下治. Wise men of later times should also cultivate Lute music, to illustrate the benevolent rule of the Ancient Sovereigns: 'to play the Lute in order to sing the sway of the Ancient Kings' 彈琴以詠先王之風 (韓氏外傳, ch. 2).

Already the Chinese word for Lute in itself pointed to this high destiny. As is well known, a favourite Chinese way of explaining a word is to couple it with a homonym. So in the Book of Rites, *Li-chi*, the word 'virtue' Chin. *tê* 德, is explained as *tê* 得, 'possessing (rectitude)' In the same way the *Fêng-su-t'ung-i* 風俗通義 explains the word *ch'in* 琴 (lute), by coupling it with the homonym *chin* 禁, which means 'restraining'. The text reads: 'Lute means restraining. With this instrument licentiousness and falsehood are restrained, and the human heart is rectified'. This phrase makes, according to Confucianist teachings, the Lute an instrument for 'nourishing the heart' *yang-hsin* 養心. The philosopher Mencius observes: 'To nourish the heart there is nothing better than to make the desires few. Here is a man whose desires are few—in some things he may not be able to keep his heart, but they will be few. Here is a man whose desires are many—in some things he may be able to keep his heart, but they will be few' (Cf. Legge, Mencius, Book VII, 35). Thus the Lute, through its capacity for restraining human passions, was a suitable instrument for everyone desiring to become the ideal statesman and ruler of the Confucianist school of thought, the Superior Man, the Chün-tzû 君子.

So the Lute became one of the indispensable implements belonging to the outfit of the scholar, it became a symbol of literary life. As an old text says: 'The Superior Man does not suffer the Lute to be separated from him during one single moment' <sup>61)</sup> Also from a practical point of view it was suitable for solitary enjoyment. Scholars with musical inclinations could, when reciting the songs of the Book of Odes, *Shih-ching*, or some famous old essay, accompany this on the Lute, as an elegant enjoyment, sanctioned by tradition. Literati who, despite the trend of the times, clung to a strict observance of ancient principles, also with regard

61) *Fêng-su-t'ung-i*, cf. below, p. 71.

to music, considered the Lute as the stronghold of the music of the ancients, since here in one instrument were combined all the elevated conceptions expressed by the Ceremonial Music. Therefore they deepened its significance, in order to remove it farther from ordinary music, and to consolidate its position as the treasure house of true music, and the only officially recognized musical instrument of the literary class.

So we see that the very fact that music in general became the opposite of literary musical ideas, caused these conceptions to be ever more withdrawn in the narrow circle centring round the Lute. The more popular and foreign music advanced, the more the system of ideas connected with the Lute was enlarged, and elaborated on the basis of ancient classical passages. It was in the course of this process of emphasizing the difference between the Lute and secular music that the ideology of the Lute was established and developed till it became a separate system of thought.

This tendency to stress the isolated position of the Lute as the one instrument of the true Confucianist scholar, appears constantly in the tenets of ch'in ideology. Efforts are made to keep Lute music for the use of the literary class only, that it may not be tainted with vulgar or foreign influences. Already for purely practical reasons the Lute lay outside the reach of the common people, since good instruments were expensive, the technique of playing extremely difficult, and teachers rare. The lower classes could afford to buy a guitar or a violin, and play popular tunes on it, relying on the ear; but the Lute had its own complicated system of notation, incomprehensible for those not specially educated in literature. In addition to this, artificial barriers were drawn up: explicit rules define the classes of people to whom the Lute may be played or taught. These lists are highly instructive. They mention, e.g., merchants and vulgar people as unqualified for occupying themselves with the Lute, thus underlining the tendency to keep the Lute reserved for the small circle of the elect.

Many of these rules can only be appreciated in their real significance by comparing them with the actual conditions of music which I described above. We find, among the people who are forbidden to touch the Lute, for instance singing girls and actors. That this group was included is evidently in protest against the fact that at the more intimate parties at the court the Lute was also played to execute Yüeh-fu songs. This kind of music is even registered as a special class, the so-called *ch'in-ch'ü-ko'-ts'ü* 琴曲歌詞.<sup>62)</sup> That many handbooks for the Lute also exclude

<sup>62)</sup> For a collection of poems sung to this music cf. *Yüeh-fu-shih-chi* 樂府詩集, by Kuo Mao-ch'ien (郭茂倩, Sung period), chapter VIII.

Buddhist priests from Lute music, and sharply denounce the music of foreign countries as 'barbarian', is doubtless to be interpreted as a reaction against the ascendancy of the Indian and Central Asiatic elements in secular music. In the next section of this chapter I shall discuss these rules in more detail. The examples given here may suffice to show that the break between real musical conditions and Confucian literary musical ideals was one of the factors that promoted the evolution of ch'in ideology.

Next to this social factor, which for convenience sake may be called Confucianistic, there was also a second, that might be called the Taoistic, lying in quite another domain of culture, viz. that of religion.

This second factor which promoted the coming into being of ch'in ideology is also slightly involved, and makes a detailed explanation necessary.

As mentioned above the Lute was considered as a means for regaining man's original purity by restraining low desires and banishing evil thoughts. This belief in the original purity of human nature, doubtless one of the fundamentals of Chinese thought, is one of the most important links that connect Taoism and Confucianism. But the Taoist and Confucianist explanations and appreciation of this conception differ considerably.

For the Confucianist, purity of nature is one of the accomplishments of the Superior Man. He reaches this state of perfection by a cultivation of the person, and by rectifying the mind. The Superior Man should always preserve this purity intact. Then he becomes the ideal Statesman and the ideal Ruler.

In Taoism, however, speculations regarding the original purity of human nature rise far above the very earthly teachings of Confucianism; human nature is considered from a cosmic point of view. For the Taoist the Universe is a manifestation, one peculiar aspect, of an all-pervading, supernatural agency, indicated by the term Tao, which gave its name to the system. It is difficult to find for this term one entirely satisfactory equivalent; the Way seems most convenient. This Tao is present in all things, in the most elevated as well as in the most base. The aim of Taoism is to learn to see one's own self as a part of this Tao, so as to reach a complete reunion with it. Taoist writings constantly mention, as a condition for reaching this state of highest bliss and delivery from all earthly bonds, a regaining of the original purity. This original purity may be reached by returning to the utmost simplicity, both in mental and physical aspects. One must do away with all the superfluous things

with which man has surrounded himself, thereby better to be able to concentrate upon the essence of Tao, and by such introspection attain the primordial serenity. In the Tao-tê-ching this is called "returning to the root, and so regaining serenity".<sup>63)</sup>

Taoist writers give several descriptions of this state of complete reunion with Tao. *Lieh-tzû* describes this blissful condition as follows: "After nine years (of meditation under the guidance of a master) I gave up speaking and thinking, I did not know the difference between benefit and damage, I did not know whether my master was really my master, nor yet that another was my friend. Outer and inner life had completely melted together. Thereafter the five senses also melted together, I could not determine whither sensations came. My mind was frozen, my body free, flesh and bones seemed to have become rarified. I did not know on what my body rested, nor did I know what was under my feet. I was borne hither and thither, like a leaf that falls from a tree, or like dry chaff, without knowing whether the wind was riding on me, or I on the wind."<sup>64)</sup>

Another description of this state of detachment from earthly bonds is given in a passage in the works of the philosopher Chuang-tzû: "Formerly I dreamt that I was a butterfly, freely fluttering about, just as it liked. I did not know that it was I. Suddenly I awoke, and realized that I was I. Now I wonder whether I dreamt that I was a butterfly, or whether I now am a butterfly, dreaming that it is I."<sup>65)</sup>

For the method of meditative self-culture, Chuang-tzû coined the term *Yang-shêng* 養生 "nurturing (the spiritual life)". In the chapter that has this title as its heading he says: "If one takes Tao as standard, then one may preserve one's body, complete one's life, and exhaust one's term of years".<sup>66)</sup> This *yang-shêng* is to be compared with *yang-hsin*, mentioned above with regard to Confucianist teachings: for *yang-shêng* also, a restraining of desires is obligatory.

These early Taoist conceptions are the foundation on which the most imposing monuments of Chinese thought are built. It seems, however, that these teachings were taken in their literal sense already at a fairly

63) Op. cit., ch. 16: 歸本曰靜.

64) Op. cit., ch. 黃帝: 九年之後, 橫心之所念, 橫口之所言, 亦不知我之是非利害歟, 亦不知彼之是非利害歟, 亦不知夫子之爲我師, 若人之爲我友, 內外進矣, 而後眼如耳, 耳如鼻, 鼻如口, 無不同也, 心凝形釋骨肉都融, 不覺形之所依倚, 足之所履, 隨風東西, 猶木葉幹骸, 竟不知風乘我, 我乘風乎.

65) Ch. II, last passage: 昔者莊周夢爲胡蝶, 栩栩然胡蝶也, 自喻適志與, 不知周也, 俄然覺則蘧蘧然周也, 不知周之夢爲胡蝶, 胡蝶之夢爲周與.

66) 緣督以爲經, 可以保身, 可以全生……可以盡年.



early date. Especially in the first century A.D., when Taoism was re-organized after the example of Buddhism, the accent fell more and more on the materialistic aspects of meditation. Meditation was no longer exclusively considered as a means for salvation, but chiefly as a means for obtaining occult powers, to perform all kinds of magical feats. So the passage of Lieh-tzû quoted above was interpreted as a description of a method of accomplishing levitation, while Chuang-tzû's definition of *yang-shêng* was taken to refer to the art of prolonging life. The lofty teachings of Taoism degenerated into alchemy, aiming at transmuting metals and finding the elixir of Immortality.

Now returning to the Lute, we see that the fundamentals of ch'in ideology described above fitted in exactly with Taoism, both with its philosophical and with its alchemistic aspect.

Playing the Lute purifies the nature by banishing low passions, therefore it is a sort of meditation, a means for communicating directly with Tao. Its rarified notes reproduce the "sounds of emptiness", and so the music of the Lute tunes the soul of the player in harmony with Tao. Further, as we shall see below, the measurements and the construction of the Lute all stand for cosmic elements, so its contemplation is conducive to a realization of eternal truths and cosmic harmony.

Therefore it is only natural that the passages of Lieh-tzû and Chuang-tzû quoted above were taken as subjects for Lute compositions. During the Sung dynasty Mao Chung-wêng composed the tune Lieh-tzû-yü fêng (毛仲翁, 列子禦風) "Lieh-tzû riding on the wind", and in the Yüan period Mao Min-chung composed the tune Chuang-tzû-mêng-tieh (毛敏仲, 莊子夢蝶) "Chuang-tzû dreaming of the Butterfly". The latter in particular is a very delicate composition, with striking passages entirely in harmonics, which suggest the detached state of mind indicated by the subject.

Seen from the more materialistic angle, playing the ch'in was a means for purifying the body, thus bestowing upon the performer freedom from sickness, and longevity. To obtain these blessings neo-Taoistic writers recommend, next to fasting etc., also exercises<sup>67)</sup> for learning

67) A most detailed description of all these exercises is given in the *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* (cf. Appendix II, 4), the section *Ch'ing-hsiu-miao-lun* 清修妙論. Further I refer to the excellent article by Henri Maspéro, *Les procédés de "nourrir le principe vital" dans la religion taoïste ancienne* (Journal Asiatique, vol. ccxix, 1937). A convenient summary of the materialistic side of Taoist teachings is given in O. S. Johnson, *A study of Chinese Alchemy*, Shanghai 1928; see also M. Chikashige, *Alchemy and other chemical achievements of the ancient orient*, Tokyo 1936, and A. Forke, *Geschichte der mittelalterlichen chinesischen Philosophie*, Hamburg 1939, P. 131 sq.

to regulate breathing, *lien-ch'i* 鍊氣. Now playing the Lute is said to harmonise the circulation of the blood, thereby regulating the breathing. In this way the vital Yang-essence in the body is cultivated, and evil influences are driven away. As the philosopher Kuan-tzû 管子 observes: 'to regulate the blood and the breath, in order to obtain longevity' 導血氣以求長年.

Therefore the Lute is allotted a very special place amongst the Treasures of the Library: playing the Lute can not be mentioned in one and the same breath as playing chess, or other literary pursuits. In the Questions and Answers on the Study of the Lute,<sup>68)</sup> we read: 'Question: Which is more, the Lute or chess?—Answer: The quadruplet Lute-chess-calligraphy-painting has been used since the time of Hui-tsung (1101-1125) of the Sung dynasty. But in reality the Lute is an instrument that embodies Tao, and as such it is entirely different from chess. The Lute is near to Taoism, it teaches one how to subdue the scheming mind. To illustrate this the tune *Ou-lu-wang-chi*<sup>69)</sup> was made. But for playing chess one needs just such a scheming mind. Chess experts often suffer from hemoptysis, and general decline in health. The Lute, on the contrary, driving away sickness, is a first basis for attaining prosperity. Therefore it is quite the opposite of chess.'

In this connection I may also quote an anecdote about the Sung poet Lin Pu (林逋, better known by his posthumous name Ho-ching 和靖, 967-1028): he excelled in playing the Lute and in calligraphy, but he was not very good at playing chess. He used to say: 'All things of this world I can generally understand; only I cannot bear myself to be defiled by playing chess.'<sup>70)</sup>

68) *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu*, cf. Appendix II, No. 7: 問, 琴與棋孰優. 答. 琴棋所畫四者並稱自宋徽宗時始, 實則琴爲載道之器, 與棋爲絕對反比例, 琴與道家爲最近, 宜戒機心, 是以有鷗鷺忘機之曲, 棋則專用機心, 精棋者常有嘔血傷生之事, 琴則以却病爲收效之根基, 此所以相反也.

69) A famous Lute tune, composed during the Sung period by Liu Chih-fang 劉志方. Most ch'in-pu explain this song as follows: There was an old fisherman, who used to take delight in long trips on the sea. The flocks of gulls were so used to him, that he could pat them. His wife knew of this, and one evening when he came home, she said to him: I like gulls. Why not bring one or two with you, so that I may enjoy looking at them? At dawn the fisherman went out. But the flocks of the gulls flew high, and did not come down to him. 鷗鷺忘機, 有海翁者, 常遊海上, 羣鷗習而狎焉, 其妻知之, 抵暮還家, 謂翁曰, 鷗鳥可娛, 盍携一二歸玩之, 至旦往, 則群鷗高飛而不下矣. This parable is an elaboration after a passage of Lieh-tzû II, 11; its meaning is that as long as man is without desire, without a 'scheming mind', he shall live in complete harmony with nature.

70) Lin Pu shows the typical mentality of the Lute player: he did not care for worldly things, did not marry or adopt sons, but spent his days in a secluded abode, where he cultivated plum trees and reared cranes. People therefore used to say of him: 'The plum trees are his wife, the cranes his sons' 梅妻鶴子.

Lute amateurs indignantly protest against the designation of Lute music as an art 藝: for it is far more than that, it is a Way, a path of wisdom, Tao 道<sup>71</sup>.

From the above it will be clear that next to the influence of Confucianist literary tradition, Taoist conceptions also contributed to the formation of ch'in ideology, and promoted its further development. As was also pointed out above, the Lute was, however, played only by a comparatively small number of the literati. Therefore, to explain the wide divergence of ch'in ideology, to the above-mentioned factors a third one must be added, viz. the psychological one.

This psychological factor can be described in a few words. Few scholars were expert on the Lute, but on various occasions in official and private life they enjoyed popular music. Now the Lute supplied a means of self-justification for these scholars, both to other people and to themselves. In all sorts of mixed company the scholar could listen with delight to performances of popular music, and from time to time lustily chime in with some gay song; but when asked about his views on music, he could gravely point to the Lutes hanging up in his library, and thereby definitely remove all doubts that might exist with regard to his elevated disposition. On the other hand, returning from a noisy banquet with some old friends, enlivened by the presence of some charming singing girls, the scholar could, in the silence of his library, take the Lute from its brocade cover, burn incense, and touch a few strings, thereby convincing himself that, although he might temporarily amuse himself with vulgar music, in order to while away some moments of leisure, in reality he only appreciated the sacred Music of the Ancients.

There could be mentioned also other reasons for the coming into being and further evolution of ch'in ideology, but in my opinion the three factors mentioned above must be considered as the decisive ones. I have discussed these three factors here separately, but it goes without saying that in the literature on the Lute it is impossible to make such clear distinctions, and various views are found woven together.

Only in a few cases are the Confucianist and Taoist spheres of thought clearly differentiated as, for instance, in the two characteristics that should mark Lute music, viz. *chin* 禁, 'restraining' and *hsün* 順, 'following', defined in this way: 'Restraining means driving away the false nature constituted by wantonness and low desire. Following means nurturing the Right Essence of balanced harmony' 禁則去慾淫之邪心, 順則養中和之正氣

71) See below, p. 82.

(Liu Yü, preface to Yang Piao-chêng's ch'in-pu, cf. App. II, No. 12).

Both views are also summarized in the two fixed epithets of the Lute, viz. *ya* 雅 'accomplished, elegant' and *miao* 妙 'wonderful'.

The question arises which of the two factors mentioned above had most influence on the development of ch'in ideology. As far as I can see, the answer must be that it was Taoistic ideas that predominated in the evolution of this system of thought. One might say that the formulation of the fundamental thoughts of ch'in ideology is Confucianistic, but that their contents are typically Taoistic. The literati, being as a rule of an eclectic disposition, accepted these Taoist teachings, since they did not clash with classical ideals, nor detracted from the special high position of the Lute.

Herewith we must also take into consideration the fact that the Taoist considerations mentioned above corresponded directly with the most archaic, the pre-classical, Chinese notions. Taoism was the receptacle in which archaic Chinese thoughts were preserved. For instance cultivating the Yang principle, the essence of light and vitality, is a very old conception: hence jade, cowry shells and other objects, credited with possessing a great amount of Yang power, were deposited in the tomb together with the deceased, to guard the corpse, and thereby the earthly spirit *p'o* 魄 against decay. Thus the notion that playing the Lute strengthens the Yang essence and thereby prolongs earthly life, fits in with the most archaic conceptions.

Through this preponderance of the Taoist element, ch'in ideology, notwithstanding the Confucianist tendency to keep the Lute as purely Chinese as possible, still remained open for foreign influences, as long as these were not detrimental to the sacred character of the Lute. These foreign elements are mainly Buddhist, and through Taoism some later schools of Mahayanic Buddhism, which might be comprised under the general name of Mantrayana, had some influence on the Lute. The alchemist teachings of neo-Taoism show too many striking affinities with Mantrayanic magical practices, for there not to have existed much interaction between them. Just as Taoist sorcery aims at prolonging life, levitation, subduing devils and other magical powers, so the Mantrayana teaches that the devoted practitioner may acquire the *aṣṭasiddhi*, the eight magical powers, i.e. levitation (*laghimā*), becoming invisible (*adr̥ṣyā*), etc. To obtain these siddhi's Mantrayanic texts describe in detail complicated rituals, different according to the special deity worshipped and the aim desired. But the preliminaries remain the same: the practitioner must bathe, put on new clothes, then choose a clean place



in a quiet abode, and burn incense. Only then may he go on to the drawing of the magic circle (*maṇḍala*), and in the centre thereof imagine, or actually build, the altar. After these preparations he may start on the execution of the ritual.

Now when we read in the handbooks for the Lute player the elaborate rules describing where and how the Lute may be played, we cannot fail to notice their striking resemblance with Mantrayanic magical rites. To begin with, the table with the Lute on it is constantly referred to as *ch'in-tan* 琴壇, 'Lute Altar'. This altar should be erected preferably on a beautiful spot in nature: it must be far from all worldly noise, pure, and surrounded by exquisite scenery. In the next section of this chapter I shall give more particulars. This short description may suffice to show the affinity with the rules given in for instance the Mahāvairocana-sūtra for *tsé-ti* 擇地 'choosing the place (for erecting the altar)': there it is said that one should select a mountainous landscape, with trees and rivulets; borders of streams, frequented by wild geese and singing birds, a pure and secluded abode.<sup>72)</sup> Also the other rules resemble the Mantrayanic ritual: before touching the Lute the player must don ceremonial dress, wash his hands, rinse his mouth, and purify his thoughts. After having burned incense he may take the Lute from its cover, and place it on the Lute table. Then he should sit down before it in a reverent mood, and regulate his breath and concentrate his mind. His body should be kept steady and erect, 'unmoving and imposing like the T'ai shan'. Yet his mental attitude must be humble, 'as if he were standing before a superior'.

That thus playing the Lute became a magical act, a ritual for communicating with mysterious powers, is, in my opinion, doubtless due to this indirect Mantrayanic influence.

Further the Lute underwent Buddhist influences directly. There were many Lute players among famous monks<sup>73)</sup>, like, during the T'ang period, Master Ying 穎師, and, during the Sung dynasty, I-hai 義海 and Liang-yü 良玉. Some Indian priests when they came to China also brought Lute-like instruments with them, and Chinese scholars studied these foreign instruments in connection with the Chinese Lute. We find,

72) Taishō-issaikyō 大正一切經 No. 848, translated by Çubhākarasimha 施無畏, T'ang period. Cf. *Hobogirin*, dictionnaire encyclopédique du Bouddhisme d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises, 1937, s. v. *chakuji*. These Indian ideas fitted in with Chinese conceptions of the salutary effect of contemplating beautiful scenery; see below, section 3 of this chapter.

73) Cf. Ch'in-shih (Appendix II, No. 9), ch. 2.

e.g., that Ou-yang Hsiu (歐陽修, 1007-1072), famous poet and scholar of the Sung period, praised in a poem<sup>74)</sup> the performance of the monk Ho-pai 和自 on an Indian stringed instrument (probably the *vīṇā*).

A curious result of this direct Buddhist influence is the fact that among the better known ch'in tunes there is one entitled *Shih-t'an* 釋談 'Buddhist Words', which is nothing but a Mantrayanic magic formula, a *dhāraṇī* (Chin. 陀羅尼, translated *chên-yen* 真言).<sup>75)</sup> The music of this tune is decidedly Indian, vibrato's and glissando's reproducing the frequent melismes used in Buddhist polyphonic chant in China and Japan up to this day. The words are also given, for the greater part in transcribed bastard Sanskrit, the usual language of *dhāraṇī*'s, and starting with the stereotyped opening formula 'Hail to the Buddha! Hail to the Law! Hail to the Community!' (*namo buddhāya namo dharmāya namaḥ samghāya* 南無佛陀耶南無達摩耶南無僧伽耶).

As far as I know the first printed text of this tune was published by Yang Lun in his ch'in-pu *Po-ya-hsin-fa* (preface dated 1609; cf. Appendix II, No. 13). The editor added a commentary, which is an interesting example of the scanty knowledge that the literati in general possessed of Buddhist texts. He says: 'I find that this tune is a magic formula by the Ch'an Master Pu-an, which later people set to music. Originally Sanskrit has the sounds *êrh-ho*, *san-ho* and *ssû-ho*,<sup>76)</sup> each represented by a letter. In Chinese script only the notation for the Lute has these letters. Therefore the Mirror of the Rhymes of the Seven Sounds<sup>77)</sup> originated in India, answering to the seven strings of the Lute. This is

74) Cf. Collected works of Ou-yang Hsiu, 外集, ch. 3, the poem *Sung-ch'in-sêng-ho-pai*.

75) Curiously enough this tune seems rather popular: it is included in the repertoire of the *p'i-p'a*, and in 1929 a version for the *san-hsien* was published (cf. *Yin-yüeh-tsa-chih* 'Music Magazine', Vol. I. 5, Peking, 1929).

76) *Êrh-ho*, *san-ho* and *ssû-ho* are technical terms used in Chinese transcriptions of Sanskrit texts, indicating that the two, three, or four characters preceding the sign should be contracted; e.g., 里波二合 is to be read *rva*, and not *riva*, 悉恒里三合 is to be read *stri*, and not *sitari*, etc. The author connects these signs with the same indications used in ch'in annotation, where they mean: 'make this note sound together with the preceding one (*êrh-ho*), or with the two preceding ones (*san-ho*); for instance one plucks the fourth string, whilst the sound of a vibrato produced on the second string, has not yet died away. From this queer association one would conclude that Yang Lun misunderstood entirely the meaning of *êrh-ho* etc. in Sanskrit transcriptions. For a detailed discussion of the system the Chinese used for transcribing Sanskrit texts I may refer to my book *Hayagriva, the Mantrayanic Aspect of Horse Cult in China and Japan*, Leyden 1935; p. 48: The reading of the magic formulae.

77) *Ch'i-yin-yün-chien*: these four characters look like the title of a book, though I could not identify it as such.

the origin of them (i.e. of the Seven Sounds). Those tones which formerly were sung by the monks in the garden of Anāthapiṇḍada,<sup>78)</sup> are now adapted to the Lute. The music wherewith Gautama Buddha could subdue a mad elephant and cure the bites of venomous snakes, can now be used to make cranes dance and for taming pheasants. Although Confucianism and Buddhism fundamentally originate from different sources, their music mysteriously forms a true bond between them, although at first sight one would be inclined to dismiss this idea with a laugh.' 按斯曲, 卽普庵禪師之咒語, 後人以律調擬之也, 蓋緣梵有二合三合四合之音, 亦有其字, 華書惟琴譜有之, 故七音韻鑑, 出自西域, 應琴七絃, 斯之所由出也, 昔作僧梵于給園, 今付微音于百納, 瞿曇氏, 所爲調狂象, 制毒龍者, 茲可以舞鶴而馴雉矣, 雖儒釋固自異源, 而音韻微有冥契, 聊寄一時之笑傲云耳。

The priest Pu-an lived from 1115-1169, and was famous for his magical powers. He is said to have been able to heal maladies, command rain and drought, and to perform other magical feats. He left a book in three chapters, entitled *Pu-an-yin-su-ch'an-shih-yü-lu* 普庵印肅禪師語錄. It would seem that Yang Lun connects the seven kinds of sounds distinguished by Indian grammarians (guttural, palatal etc.) with the seven notes of the Chinese scale (kung, shang, chiao, chih, yü, pien-kung, pien-chih). With regard to this amazing statement I may draw attention here to the fact that Chinese scholars with Buddhist interests often were very well read in the Buddhist Canon, but seldom showed any knowledge of the real conditions depicted in those texts; further it is worth noticing that they were firmly convinced that Indian civilization was a kind of far-off and deteriorated Chinese culture.

Ch'in-pu of the Ch'ing period usually include this tune Shih-t'an, always adding the remark that the musical notation was drawn up by the poet and Lute expert Han Chiang (韓昌, style: Ching-chêng 經正, literary name Shih-kêng 石耕, lived in the beginning of the Ch'ing period). I have tried to find out where Han Chiang obtained this formula and its music, but without result: even for a Lute player he was an extremely eccentric and cantankerous fellow, who never married but spent his days roaming up and down the vast Ch'ing Empire, always dragging along his Lute and a couple of padlocked coffers with the manuscripts of his poetical works.<sup>79)</sup> As the music of the tune Shih-t'an is doubtless of In-

78) 給園, abbreviation of 給孤獨園, Sanskrit: *Anāthapiṇḍadāśyaramaḥ*, the estate in which was located the Jetavana, the favourite abode of Buddha. It was presented to the Community by the rich merchant Anāthapiṇḍada, a fervent worshipper of the Enlightened One. Fa-hsien has given a description of this sacred place (Cf. Beal's translation, p. 75).

79) Cf. Han Chiang's detailed biography in the *Ta-ch'ing-chi-fu-hsien-chê-chuan* 大清錢輔先哲傳, ch. 27.

39255



dian origin, I am inclined to believe that he heard it somewhere in a Lamaist temple.

In this way at least the other Indian tune among the Lute tunes originated. In 1893 the Ch'an priest K'ung-ch'ên 空塵禪師 published a handbook for the Lute, entitled *K'u-mu-ch'an-ch'in-pu* 枯木禪琴譜. To the usual repertoire of Lute tunes he adds some of his own composition, amongst others a Lute version of a chant sung by Lamaist monks, called *Na-lo-fa-ch'ü* 那羅法曲.<sup>80)</sup> He added a colophon which says: 'In the autumn of the year 1888 I visited a friend in Peking. Wandering aimlessly about, I came to the Chan-t'an-ssü,<sup>81)</sup> and there heard the lamas sing in chorus a Sanskrit chant, in clear and harmonious tones. I asked the people there what it was and learned that it was the old Na-lo-fa-ch'ü. The next day at noon I went there again, bringing my Lute with me, and asked the lamas to sing the chant once more. Then I accompanied it on my Lute. Having thus obtained the whole tune in notation, I gave it this title, that it may be put on record, at the same time following the example set by Shu Hsi<sup>82)</sup> in writing his *Pu-wang-shih*, requesting all highminded connoisseurs to correct it' 戊子秋訪友京都, 間步旃檀寺, 聽喇嘛齊歌梵唄, 音聲清和, 詢之左右, 知其爲那羅法曲之遺音, 翌午携琴復往, 乞其反之而後撫絃和之, 得譜成曲, 卽題斯名以紀之, 亦效東晉補亡之意, 祈諸高明正之。

I think it must have been in a similar way that Han Chiang obtained his version of the tune Shih-t'an.

Be this as it may, these two examples will perhaps suffice to show to what extent Buddhism influenced Lute music, notwithstanding the Confucianist tendency to keep the Lute as purely Chinese as possible.

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Summing up the remarks in chapter I about the oldest history of the

80) *Na-lo* 那羅 may mean the deity Nārāyaṇa 那羅延那, or it may stand for Nārada 那羅陀, or again for Naropa, 那羅巴祖師, the Indian Vajra-teacher, who in the 11th century came to Tibet, and there acquired great fame; the last alternative seems the most probable. *Fa-ch'ü* must mean here 'Buddhist (Dharma)-hymn' although Chin. dictionaries only give it as a *Taoist* chant, much in vogue at the court of the T'ang Emperors (cf. *Ts'ü-yüan* 辭源, s.v.).

81) 'Temple of the Sandalwood Buddha', in 1900 destroyed by the Allied Forces, as it was one of the centres of the Boxers; it stood near the present National Library. Cf. Arlington and Lewisohn, *In search of old Peking*, 1935, p. 134-135. As is shown above, K'ung-ch'ên visited this temple only twelve years before the Boxer troubles broke out.

82) Shu Hsi, style Kuang-wei 廣微, 3rd century A. D. He wrote six poems in the style of the Book of Odes, *Shih-ching*, in order to complete their number, which according to tradition was 311. These poems he called *Pu-wang* 補亡, 'Supplementing what has been lost'; they are to be found in the *Wên-hsüan* 文選, ch. 19.



Lute, and the above discussions about the various elements of ch'in ideology, we may state that the Lute from the end of the Shang period appears as a part of the orchestra for sacred music. During the latter half of the Chou dynasty the Lute appears also in the orchestra of more worldly music, and at the same time as a popular solo instrument of the cultured class. Some of its features made the Lute particularly suited for retaining, more than any other instrument, certain ancient conceptions of a magical character, properly belonging not only to the Lute, but to music in general. The Lute being more widely used in daily life than the complete orchestra, the virtues ascribed to the orchestra and to music generally were gradually all transferred to the Lute.

When the Confucianist school of thought was established, and actual musical conditions were found not to answer to the theoretical principles, the literati connected the archaic conceptions associated with the Lute with their secondarily evolved dogmas of a paradisaical antiquity, and they praised the Lute as the favourite musical instrument of the Holy Kings of olden times.

Especially during the Han period, which was marked by a tendency to return to the glorified images of mythical antiquity, the position of the Lute as the unique symbol of all correct and accomplished music was further consolidated. Several special treatises on the Lute and its significance appear: the *Ch'in-ch'ing-ying* 琴清英, by Yang Hsiung (揚雄, 53-18 B.C.), the *Ch'in-tao* 琴道, by Huan T'an (see above p. 34), and the *Ch'in-tsao* 琴操, by the famous writer Ts'ai Yung (see App. II, No. 1).

During the subsequent Chin and Wei periods, when Buddhism spread over China, and neo-Taoism flourished, the magical virtues of the Lute as being conducive to meditation, and prolonging life, were again stressed. From this period dates the celebrated *Ch'in-fu* 琴賦, 'Poetical Essay on the Lute', by Hsi K'ang (嵇康, style: Shu-yeh 叔夜, 223-262). Here the mysterious virtues of the Lute are celebrated in exquisite language, and the materials suited for building Lutes are described. This essay may be called the best known literary production relating to the Lute, and quotations from it will be found in nearly every treatise on this subject; it may be found in the *Wên-hsüan* 文選, ch. 18.

Protected alike by Confucianism and Taoism, and being also in accordance with Buddhist principles, the Lute was firmly established in its privileged position. During the Sui and T'ang periods, when popular music was prospering, the Lute was cultivated especially by the literati. It is at this time that we hear the names of famous Lute builders: for instance some members of the *Lei* 雷 family.

During the Sung dynasty it seems that the Lute was played in broad circles of literati: the literature of this period shows hundreds of poems and essays on the Lute. It was at this time that the scholar Chu Ch'ang-wên composed his *Ch'in-shih* (琴史, cf. App. II, No. 2), from which I shall quote below.

When, after the Yüan dynasty, China was again united under a pure Chinese dynasty, the Mings, there appeared a conservative tendency similar to that of the Han Period: a return to ancient Chinese standards. The Ming dynasty saw the high day of Lute and Lute music; the standard handbooks for the Lute were published, and endeavours were made to assemble the various elements of ch'in ideology, and arrange them more systematically. In the refined social milieus of the period, where the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, genre painting and other arts were enthusiastically practised, the Lute found congenial surroundings.

As pointed out above, during the Ch'ing period the interest in the Lute waned gradually, to grow again in recent times.

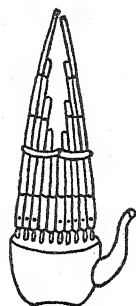
I may end this chapter with translating a passage from the *Ch'in-shih* of Chu Ch'ang-wên, from which one may see how the development of the Lute and Lute ideology appeared to a scholar of the Sung period.

'The music of the Lute prospered under the Emperors Yao and Shun, and during the Three Dynasties (i.e. Hsia, Shang and Chou). But since the beginning of the period of the Warring States, the accomplished tones decayed and lewd music arose: people liked meretricious and decadent notes and were averse to harmonious and serene music. Prince Wên of Wei (426-387 B.C.) was a good ruler of those times, but he said: "When in full ceremonial dress I must listen to the Ancient Music, I think I shall fall asleep." (If a man of such an exalted position showed so little understanding), how much worse then the ordinary people of those times must have been. Later the cither from Ch'in, the barbarian flute, the harp, the p'i-p'a and other similar instruments rose in succession and spread, while the Lute fell into oblivion. When the Hans came to rule, they had no time for restoring the ancient customs, but Hsien-wang (son of Ching-ti, 156-140 B.C.) devoted much time to a study of the accomplished music. During the reigns of the Emperors Hsiao and Hsüan, Lute players like Mr. Chih, Mr. Lung, Mr. Chao and Mr. Shih for the first time used in their books on the Lute the expression *Ya-ch'in* 'Accomplished Lute', to distinguish it from vulgar music. Moreover Huan T'an (see above) and K'ung Yen (style Shu-yüan 舒元, 268-320) collected tunes of the Lute, and great Confucianist scholars of that time,

such as Ma Yung (style : Chi-ch'ang 季長, 79-166) and Ts'ai Yung (see App. II, 1), especially loved this art (of playing the Lute). Therefore all the people of those times held the Lute in high esteem. Thereafter Yüan Chi (阮籍, famous poet and Lute player, 210-263) and Hsi K'ang (嵇康, 223-262) promoted the Lute. With the beginning of the Wei and Chin periods, famous literati and highminded scholars studied the Lute in ever increasing numbers ; I cannot set down here all their names which are recorded in history. Coming to the Sui and T'ang periods, there were many officials who cultivated this doctrine, but poets and artists who occupied themselves with the Lute were rare. Still there were some virtuous and wise men who wrote about the Lute, like Lü Wei, Li Liang-fu, Ch'ên Cho, Chao Wei-ch'ien, Li Yo, Chai Sung, Wang Ta-li, Chên K'ang-shih and others. They are all said to have written books on the Lute, and their titles are registered in the bibliographical accounts of the histories of those periods, but I have not seen them, and neither have I heard whether they really understood the Lute or not.<sup>83)</sup>

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83) *Ch'in-shih*, ch. 6 : 琴之爲樂, 行於堯舜三代之時, 至戰國時, 雅音廢而淫樂興, 尙鏗鏘鏗鏘之聲, 而厭和樂深靜之意, 魏文侯當時之賢君, 猶云吾端冕而聽古樂, 則惟恐臥, 況其下者乎, 於是秦箏羌笛篳篥琵琶之類, 迭興而並進, 而琴亡矣, 漢興猶未暇復古, 由河間漢王留神雅樂, 孝宣時制氏, 龍氏, 趙氏, 師氏之家, 始於琴書謂之雅琴者, 以別於俗樂也, 又桓譚, 孔衍, 皆集琴操, 乃馬融, 蔡邕, 以大儒名當時特好斯藝, 時人翕然宗尙, 阮嗣宗, 稽叔夜紹而倡之, 自魏及晉, 名儒高士, 學者益多, 而史冊之間, 豈遑徧述, 迨乎隋唐, 搢紳多以是道爲務, 而清言雅伎, 罕嘗攻之, 間有賢智有所論著, 如呂渭, 李良輔, 陳拙, 趙惟謙, 李約, 齊嵩, 王大力, 陳康士之徒, 皆云有書, 其名載於藝文志, 然余所未覩, 亦不聞其果精於琴與否.



### 3. DISPOSITION AND DISCIPLINE OF THE LUTE PLAYER

The Lute should be played amidst charming scenery, or in the library, before flowers, during a moonlight night in autumn, while burning incense—Rules defining the classes of people for whom the Lute may be played, and for whom not—Occasional sectarian views, excluding Buddhists—Correct way of carrying the Lute, Lute pages—Ch'in-shih, the Lute Chamber—Ch'in-shê, spiritual community of the Lute.

'Mountains and water' *shan-shui* 山水 is the name by which in artistic treatises the Chinese designate a landscape, thereby determining its two most essential elements: in mountains and streams, vast and imposing, the eternal Tao shall reveal itself to the contemplative observer.

Under an old pine tree, sitting on a steep bank overhanging a flowing stream, absorbed in the contemplation of far mountain tops severed from the earth by floating mists, such is the scenery with which Chinese painters love to surround the Lute player.

When, borne on the unworldly and serene tones of the Lute, the mind of the player is purified and elevated to mystic heights, his soul may commune with the essence of the rugged rocks and vast stretches of water confronting him, and so he may experience a complete reunion with Tao. This atmosphere of wide, open nature should always accompany the Lute player; 'though his body be in a gallery or in a hall, his mind should dwell with forests and streams'.<sup>1)</sup>

It was not only esthetical considerations, however, that caused this custom of preferably representing the Lute player as confronted with an

1) *Ch'in-sê-ho-pu* (cf. above, note 12) fan-li p. 8: 雖身列廊廟必意在林泉.



impressive mountain landscape. Doubtless here the function of the Lute as an instrument to strengthen the vital essence of the player also was an important factor. Further in painting, mysticism and magic lie closely together. The contemplation of the beauty of streams and mountains may impart to the observer the vital forces that are inherent in nature, and thereby prolong his earthly life. 'The people of old say that landscape painters often live to a high age, because they feed upon mist and clouds. The entire scenery which they have before their eyes is one spring of life.'<sup>1)</sup> This statement about the landscape painter may also be applied to the Lute player, for the conception of the magical salutary influence of contemplating mountains and streams fits in exactly with some of the more materialistic aspects of ch'in ideology.<sup>2)</sup>

The same double interpretation may be attached to the direct surroundings of the Lute player when performing on the Lute in the open: one should be near an old pine tree, admiring its gnarled, antique appearance. In the shade of the pines some cranes should be stalking, and the Lute player should admire their graceful movements, modeling on them his finger technique. Since ancient times both pine tree and crane have been credited with possessing a special amount of vital essence, and therefore both are symbols of longevity. Below, in ch. VI, I shall discuss these associations in more detail.

After some beautiful spot in the open, the abode of the scholar is the most suitable place for playing the Lute. The ideal dwelling of the scholar should breathe an atmosphere of seclusion: it is surrounded by a garden, fenced off by pine-trees or bamboos: narrow footpaths should meander among miniature rocks of interesting shapes and lotus ponds, leading to a small pavilion of rustic appearance, where the scholar may compose poetry or read his books. 'Where Ni Tsan dwelt there was the Ching-pi pavilion, breathing an atmosphere of profundity and

1) The Ch'ing painter Wang Yü 王昱, in his *Tung-chuang-lun-hua* 東莊論畫, 5th paragraph: 昔人謂山水家多壽, 蓋煙雲供養, 眼前無非生機.

2) I may remark in passing that in other respects also we find the same notions connected with both painting and Lute playing. In the same passage of the authoritative treatise on painting quoted above, it is said: 'Studying painting is a means for nurturing one's nature and emotional life...it may elevate one to serenity' 學畫所以養性情...迎靜氣.

Like the Lute player when about to touch the strings of the Lute, the painter too has first to make his mind pure and detached from all earthly desires: 'Before the painter takes up his brush, his mind must be aloof and his thoughts elated; when he starts painting, his spirit must be serene and his soul frozen' 未動筆前, 溟興高意遠, 已動筆後, 要氣靜神凝 (par. 8). This 'frozen' mental condition is a typical Taoistic notion; cf. the passage of Lieh-tzu, quoted above on page 44. Finally it is said: 'Although painting is but one of the arts, it still is a manifestation of Tao' 畫雖一藝, 其中有道 (par. 10).

remoteness from earthly things. There he had assembled several thousand books, all of which he had corrected with his own hand. On all sides there were arranged antique sacrificial vessels and famous Lutes, and the abode was surrounded by pine-trees, cinnamon trees, orchids, bamboos etc. It was fenced off by a high paling of poles and bamboo, suggesting aloofness and refined delicacy. Every time when the rain had stopped, and the wind had abated, Ni Tsan used to take his staff and wander about, just going where his steps led him. When his eye met with something which particularly struck him, he played his Lute, thus finding esthetic satisfaction. Those who saw him then knew that he was a man who dwelt outside this world'.<sup>1)</sup>

Cultivating and arranging flowers, a favourite occupation of the retired scholar, also harmonizes with the Lute player. 'One should play the Lute for the cinnamon of the mountains, prune blossoms of the waterside, jasmine, gardenia, orchids from Fu-chien, mimosa, magnolia and similar flowers. Those with a pure fragrance but without loud colours are the best'.<sup>2)</sup>

A moonlight night is dear to the Lute player: 'In spring and autumn, when the weather is limpid and harmonious, even during the night people are often awake. Then the ten thousand sounds of emptiness are all silent, and moonlight fills the sky. When one lays the Lute on his knees, and plays some small tunes, this also shall elate the feelings.'<sup>3)</sup>

The moonlight makes the thirteen studs glitter, and so guides the hands of the player. Therefore these studs are often called *chin-hsing*, brilliant stars. 'But one should play after the first watch (after nine o'clock in the evening), and before the third watch (before 1 o'clock); for before nine the noise of daily life has not yet become quiet, and after 1 o'clock one is too tired and sleepy.' *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* (App. II, 6) ch. III. 但須在一更後，三更前，蓋初更人聲未寂，三更則人倦欲眠矣。

Playing the Lute on the knees is a favourite literary theme: it is more poetical to represent the musician sitting within the circle of his friends, or in a shaded valley, with the Lute on his lap, than to have him

1) Ni Tsan 倪瓚, style: Yün-lin, 1301-1374, famous painter and poet. This passage is taken from the *Ho-shih-yü-lin* 何氏語林, compiled by Ho Liang-chün 何良俊, sixteenth century. 倪雲林所居、有清閨閣、幽迴絕塵、中有書數千卷、皆手自校、古鼎彝名琴陳列左右、松桂蘭竹之屬敷舒繚繞、其外則高木修篁蔚然深秀、每雨止風收、拂杖履自隨逍遙容與、遇會心處、鼓琴自娛、望之者識其爲世外人也

2) *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih* (cf. Appendix II, 3): 對花、宜共岩桂、江梅、茉莉、薔薇、建蘭、夜合、玉蘭等花、清香而色不艷者爲雅、Orchids from Fu-chien are praised for their pale yellow and green colours.

3) *ibid.*: 對月、春秋二候、天氣澄和、人亦中夜多醒、萬籟咸寂、月色當空、橫琴膝上、時作小調、亦可暢懷

seated behind the Lute table. Still this position is not very suitable for executing the complicated finger technique. As a Ming scholar observes: 'When people play the Lute on their knees, they can only perform smaller tunes, such as they know very well. Otherwise it is impossible.'<sup>1)</sup> From my own experience I would add that the only passages which can be executed correctly in this position are some preludes and codas, these being as a rule in the so-called 'floating sounds', that is to say the left hand does not press down the strings, but only touches them lightly, so as to produce harmonics.

When not rambling through the mountains to observe wild streams and gushing waterfalls, the scholar may still find by the quiet water-side in his own garden a congenial atmosphere for playing the Lute. 'When a breeze floats through the pines, or when there is the rippling sound of a rivulet, then especially one should play the Lute. For all these three things have natural tones, therefore they are in perfect harmony with each other. Or again by the pond near the library window where one smells the fragrance of the water lilies, or in the wood by the water side, where the redolent waves wash the islets; when the light breeze is refreshing, and the swimming fish come to the surface to listen: what joy can exceed this?'<sup>2)</sup>

As we saw in the foregoing chapter, when the Lute is played incense must be burned. The handbooks for the Lute recommend incense that gives a fine, crackling smoke. Its subtle fragrance contributes to the exalted mood necessary for playing and appreciating Lute Music. For: 'The use of incense gives manifold benefits. When retired scholars, detached from the world, are sitting together discussing Tao and its application, they burn incense to purify their hearts and rejoice their spirits. At the dead of night, when the morning moon is in the sky, artistic and sad poetical folk burn incense, and their hearts are elated and they whistle carelessly. By the bright window copying old famous scrolls, or leisurely humming, flywhisk in hand, or when reading at night under the lamp, incense is burned to drive away the demon of sleepiness. Therefore incense may be called the Old Companion of the Moon.'<sup>3)</sup>

The disposition of the Lute player must be very much like that of a

1) *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* (cf. Appendix II, 4): 人膝上鼓琴、惟純熟小操、則可、否、亦不能

2) *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih* (cf. Appendix II, 3): 臨水。鼓琴偏宜於松風、泠響之間、三者皆自然之聲、正合類聚、或對軒窗池沼、荷香撲人、或水邊林下、清漪芳沚、微風洒然、游魚出聽、此樂何極

3) *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih* (cf. App. II, 3): 香之爲用、其利最溥、物外高隱坐語道德焚之、可以清心悅神、四更殘月與味蕭瑟焚之、可以暢懷舒嘯、晴窗榻帖、揮塵閒吟、篝燈夜讀、焚以遠辟睡魔、謂古伴月

priest before sacrificing: he should be purified physically and mentally, freed from all earthly thoughts, and ready for communication with the deepest mysteries of life.

To attain to this, beside the more general rules to be found scattered in the texts quoted in the foregoing chapter, the handbooks of the Lute prescribe also a certain discipline. The rules of this discipline are summed up in various numerical categories. For instance, a handbook of the Ming period gives fourteen rules, decreeing when the Lute may be played.

1. Meeting someone who understands Music.- 2. Meeting a suitable person.- 3. For a Taoist recluse.- 4. In a high hall.- 5. Having ascended a storied pavilion.- 6. In a Taoist cloister.- 7. Sitting on a stone.- 8. Having climbed a mountain.- 9. Resting in a valley.- 10. Roaming along the water side.- 11. In a boat.- 12. Resting in the shadow of a forest.- 13. When the two essences of nature are bright and clear.- 14. In a cool breeze and when there is a bright moon.<sup>1)</sup>

In nearly all other handbooks of the Lute dating from the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties, these rules are given in about the same form. They are not very stringent, since by inserting the second rule the decision as to whom to play is practically left to the discretion of each individual performer. It should be noted that half of the items refer to playing the Lute in the open air, and that two items especially mention Taoism.

The corresponding set of rules as to whom the Lute may not be played is much more precise and severe, and therefore the least observed. The same source gives these rules as follows:

1. When there is wind and thunder, and in rainy weather.- 2. When there is a sun or moon eclipse.- 3. In a court room.- 4. In a market or shop.- 5. For a barbarian.- 6. For a vulgar person.- 7. For a merchant.- 8. For a courtesan.- 9. After inebriation.- 10. After having had sexual intercourse.- 11. In dishevelled and strange clothes.- 12. When being flushed and covered with transpiration.- 13. Not having washed one's hands and rinsed one's mouth.- 14. In loud and noisy surroundings.<sup>2)</sup>

For 3. other books give: Near a prison,<sup>3)</sup> which seems more likely. With regard to rule 5., which forbids the playing of the Lute for barbarians, the ch'in-pu especially urge strict observance of this. Another handbook of the Ming period explains this rule as follows:

1) Yang Piao-ch'eng in his handbook of the Lute (cf. Appendix II, 12): 琴有十四宜彈。遇知音、逢可人、對道士、處高堂、升樓閣、在宮觀、坐石上、登山埠、憩壑谷、遊水湄、居舟中、息林下、值二氣清朗、當清風明月

2) 琴有十四不宜彈。風雷陰雨、日月交蝕、在法司中、在市廛、對夷狄、對俗子、對商賈、對娼妓、酒醉後、夜事後、毀形異服、腋腋噪哄、不盥手漱口、鼓動喧嚷

3) Yang Lun's *T'ai-ku-i-yin* (cf. Appendix II, 13): 近囹圄



'Outside China there are people who jabber barbarian tongues. As the sounds of their language are not correct, how can they ever harmonize with the correct words of the Holy Sages? Therefore one should not play the Lute for them. The Lute is fundamentally an instrument by the music of which the Sages and Superior Men of China nurture their nature and cultivate their persons. Such a thing is unknown in barbarian countries, therefore it is not allowed.'<sup>1)</sup>

Rule 7, forbidding playing for a merchant, is amplified as follows: 'The Lute is an instrument whereby the Holy Sages cultivate their persons and nurture their nature; (this includes) being contented in poverty, knowing moderation, and restricting luxury. But merchants have sharp appetites and strong desires. Therefore a tradesman's disposition runs counter to the Way of the Holy Man.'<sup>2)</sup> This point is, however, subject to controversy. The merchant class is defended in these words: 'Bartering and trading are fundamentally not low and despicable things. The people of old often knew how to demonstrate holy truths by means of low things. Tzû-kung<sup>3)</sup> accumulated great wealth; Fan Li<sup>4)</sup> three times divided his wealth after having assembled it. When among the greatest of merchants are men like Tzû-kung and Fan Li, why then should they not be allowed to play the Lute? It is far better to look only at the character'.<sup>5)</sup>

Rule 8 and 9 were taken least seriously. It is true that courtesan is a very elastic term, but considered in the light of the general principles there can be no doubt that it was meant to be interpreted very strictly. In practice, however, we find that this rule is made to apply only to the lowest kind of courtesan. Singing girls who brighten literary gatherings on old paintings are seen playing the Lute, and novels cite Lute playing as one of the accomplishments of the perfect courtesan. Other handbooks read for 8: 娼優, or 娼妓優伶, meaning: 'courtesans and actors'. As I have pointed out already, on p. 42 above, this exclusion of the actors was meant as a protest against the great numbers of actors from

1) *Ch'in-ching* (cf. Appendix II, 5) ch. 8: 非中土有鄉譚番語者、以其語音不正、安能合聖人之正音、故不宜也、琴本中國賢人君子養性修身之樂、非蠻貊之邦所有也、故不宜

2) *Ch'in-ching*, ch. 8: 琴本聖人修身養性、甘貧知止戒盈之樂、商賈乃利欲慳食、市井之人反於聖人之道

3) Style of Tuan-mu Tz'û 端木賜, famous disciple of Confucius, who became a high official.

4) Fan Li was a man from the Ch'un-ch'iu period, who three times accumulated great wealth and three times gave it away, as he preferred a life in retirement; cf. *Shih-chi* 史記, ch. 129, *Han-shu* 漢書, ch. 91.

5) *Ch'in-ching*; ch. 8: 貨遷原非鄙賤事、古人每以鄙賤事而發神奇、子貢貨殖、范蠡三遷致富商賈之魁者以賜與蠡、撫琴豈有外之者哉、顧品格何如耶

foreign countries who found employment at the Court.

Rule 9 involved also a delicate question, many of the most famous scholars being great wine-bibbers. The Ming scholar T'u Lung has found a mild and convenient explanation of this rule. He says: 'The disposition of people who play the Lute is refined, they ought only to sip tea. Occasionally, however, they may use wine to stimulate their feelings, but only just sufficient to make them feel slightly exhilarated and no more. If one tries to play the Lute when one is really dead drunk, then this is a great shame that cannot be tolerated'.<sup>1)</sup>

The attitude which the Ch'in-pu take regarding Buddhism is interesting. As I mentioned above, the Lute was very popular with Buddhist monks, and several are cited in the lists of famous Lute performers. Still occasionally there appear in Taoist quarters sectarian views, and some handbooks of the early Ming period include an item: 'Buddhist priests' in the list of people to whom it was not allowed to play or to teach the Lute.<sup>2)</sup> Naturally this rule met with much opposition, and as an extreme reaction some Buddhists tried to prove that the Lute originated in India, since it is mentioned in the Buddhist sūtras!<sup>3)</sup> Generally, however, Lute amateurs were of too eclectic a disposition to be much impressed by either the extreme Taoist or Buddhist view, and they contented themselves with placidly quoting the two views together. A couple of extreme cases may here be cited: 'There was a monk called Chüeh (Enlightenment), who wished to study the Lute under Master Pai-ho (White

1) *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih* (cf. Appendix II, 3): 飲酒。彈琴之人風致清楚，但宜啜茗，間或用酒發興，不過微有醺意而已，若堆醺醺羅羣醺蕩情狂，飲致成醉者之狀，以事琴此大醜最宜戒也

2) E. g. *Ch'in-ching*: 沙門子不宜鼓琴

3) The passage is taken from the 31st paragraph of the *Ssü-shih-êrh-chang-ching* (四十二章經, cf. *Taishō-issaikyō* 大正一切經, No. 784). The original obviously means some Indian stringed instrument, in Chinese translations of Buddhist texts always indicated by transcriptions of Sanskrit words. For more details I may refer to the useful essay by K. Hayashi: On Musical terms in Chin. Buddhist Scriptures, in: *Tōyō-ongaku-kenkyū*, No. I, 1937 (東洋音樂研究, 林謙三, 佛典に現れた樂器、音樂、舞蹈)

That in the present case ch'in is used, is to be explained by the fact that this particular sutra was translated at a very early date (first century A.D.), when the correct renderings of Sanskrit technical terms had not yet been determined. The passage runs: Buddha asked a monk: How do you occupy yourself when at home? The monk answered: I love to play the Lute. Then Buddha asked: What happens when the strings are strung too loose?—They give no sound.—What happens when the strings are strung too tight?—They snap.—What happens when the strings are strung not too loose and not too tight?—Then all sounds come forth harmoniously.—Then the Buddha said: The study of Truth is the same: if the heart is tuned correctly, one may obtain the Truth 佛問一僧、汝處家爲何業、對曰愛彈琴、佛問緩絃如何、曰不鳴矣、絃急如何、曰聲絕矣、緩急得中如何、曰諸音普矣、佛曰學道亦然、心須調適、道可得矣 This text, taken from the *Ch'in-ching*, differs slightly from that given in the Buddhist Canon.



a

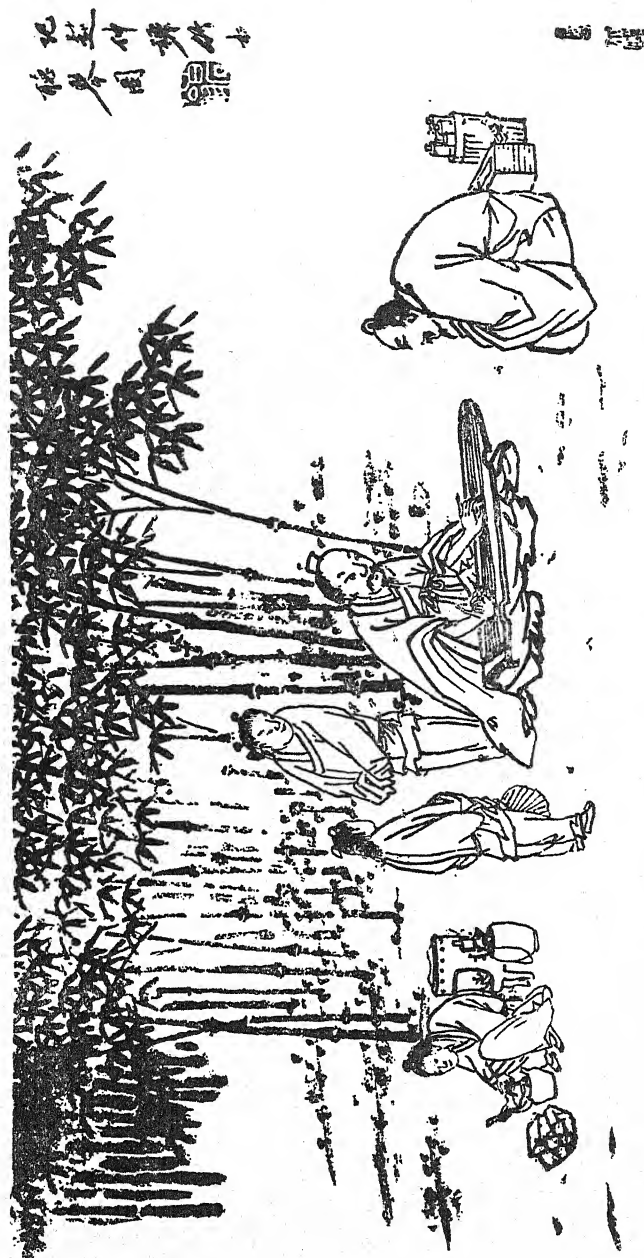
VI



b

Carrying the Lute

From: *Yang-ch'un-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, cf. below, ch. V section 3.



VII Playing the Lute in ideal surroundings. A painting by the famous Ming artist Shén Chou (沈周 1427-1509)



Crane). Master White Crane did not like the idea, and did not teach him. The monk was sad. Master White Crane said: 'This is strange indeed! The study of a certain Čākya-muni originated from the doctrines of barbarians in western countries. But the Lute represents the Tao of the Holy Men of the Middle Kingdom, so it is not suitable for you. And he persisted in not teaching him'.<sup>1)</sup>

'Master Huang-fu chose as literary name Tung-hsü-tzû (the Master of the Emptiness of the Cave). He explained the doctrines of Lao-tzû and Chuang-tzû by teaching Lute Music, and his disciples were many. Among them there were also Buddhist monks. The Master said: How can bald pates and black robes fold in their arms the instrument of the Holy Men? And pointing with his flywhisk he told them to go away.'<sup>2)</sup>

'To fold in the arms', *pao* 抱, is the traditional term used for carrying the Lute. Literature and art love to represent the ideal scholar roaming through the mountains or along the sides of streams, taking his Lute with him, to play an appropriate melody when moved by a beautiful sight. Old paintings mostly show him accompanied by a boy servant, who carries the Lute in its brocade cover in his arms. Also at home this boy was entrusted with the care for his masters Lutes, and therefore such a boy is called *Ch'in-tung* 琴童 'Lute Page'.

The handbooks give minute instructions as to how the Lute is correctly carried. A Ming handbook<sup>3)</sup> distinguishes two methods, the old and the new. Figure VI, a shows the old way: the ancients carried their Lute with the upper board turned outwards and with the head in front and the tail, a little lower, behind. During the Ming dynasty people followed the new way (cf. figure VI, b) turning the bottom board outwards, a position which was said to ensure a firm hold.

Next to Buddhism, there is another question connected with the discipline of the Lute player which has given rise to some controversy in the *ch'in-pu*, viz. whether one is allowed to accompany one's Lute play with singing or not.

In the handbooks of the Lute this question is discussed as *chan-wên* 刪文 'to cut out the words', *wên* standing here for both the text of the tunes and for prefaces and colophons added to them.

1) *Ch'in-ching* (cf. Appendix II, 5): 有僧名覺者, 學琴於道人白鶴子之門、鶴子惡而不受、僧不悅、鶴子曰怪哉、釋氏之學、出於西方、夷狄之教、琴乃中國聖人之道、非爾所宜也、竟不傳

2) *ibidem*: 皇甫先生號洞虛子、講老莊之學、以傳琴鳴、弟子甚眾、而沙門雜然、先生曰豈有髡髮緇衣而抱聖人之器乎、悉麾去之

3) *Yang-ch'un-i'ang-ch'in-pu* 陽春堂琴譜, by the same author as composed the *Ch'in-ching* (cf. Appendix II, 5)

The Ming prince Tsai-yü 朱載堉, in his standard work on music *Yüeh-hü-ch'üan-shu* 樂律全書, says that music on stringed instruments in general is impossible without the accompaniment by the human voice. In the chapter *Tsao-man-ku-yüeh-pu* 操縵古樂譜, he devotes a special section to this question, entitled: 'Discussing how the ancients did not sing without accompanying the words on the strings, nor played a stringed instrument without singing to it.'<sup>1)</sup> This he calls a fixed custom, *chang-shih* 常事 of the ancients; singing without accompaniment, or playing stringed instruments without singing he calls an exception, *pien* 變. Then he observes: 'People today when reciting poetry cannot accompany these songs on the Lute: that is because the tradition of the Lute is lost.'<sup>2)</sup>

Some among the composers of *ch'in-pü* are of the same opinion as Tsai-yü: in their notation of the tunes, they print the *chien-tz'ü* 減字 and the corresponding words of the tune in parallel vertical columns. This method is followed by i.a. Yang Piao-chêng (cf. Appendix II, 12). Others add the text of the tune separately, before or after the notation. On the other hand there were also many Lute players who maintained that to sing when playing the Lute did not conform to the sacred character of this music.

The most sensible attitude seems to be that taken by Kuo Yü-chai 郭裕齋 in his *Tê-yin-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 德音堂琴譜, publ. 1691. In his preface remarks he says: 'The Lute stands for the original harmony of what is truly from Heaven in man: its tones rise from the serenity of the soul. Therefore I do not like to restrict this music with words. For then the tones become confused, and the melody and rhythm are impeded. Therefore as a rule I have kept to the music, and left out the words. Still there are also cases where, if the words are left out, it is impossible to get the tones right. Therefore, where the text should be cut out, I cut it out, and where it should not be left out, I preserved it to show the meaning of the melody to the player.'<sup>3)</sup>

In this *ch'in-pu* all old melodies which have not from ancient times been connected with a special poem or essay, are given in notation only, whilst such as have always been associated with a definite text (as for instance some odes of the *Shih-ching*), are given together with the words. This system seems very commendable. When playing through the various tunes of the Lute repertoire, one finds that they show a considerable difference in style: the music of some is evidently nothing but the accom-

1) 論古人非弦不歌、非歌不弦

2) 今人歌詩與琴不能相入、蓋失其傳耳

3) 琴乃天真元韻、音出自然、不喜以文拘之、拘之則音雜、滯其高下抑揚、故取音而棄文、然亦有含文而不能成音者、故可刪者刪之、不可刪者存以備觀焉

paniment of a song, whilst others could hardly be accompanied by the human voice, and are apparently meant as instrumental music only. Two good examples may be found in the two pieces *Kao-shan-liu-shui* 高山流水 and *Lu-ming* 鹿鳴. The former is a highly expressive composition, impossible to accompany with the voice; the other, on the contrary, is simple and more melodical, and is doubtless a reproduction of one of the tunes to which this ancient ode was sung. In other cases it is more difficult to decide to which category a given tune belongs: the decision must be left to the taste of each individual player.

In view of the present condition of Lute music I hardly think it advisable to use the Lute for the accompaniment of songs, since its music, for practical reasons, is not suited for this. Already during the Sung dynasty the finger technique had become so complicated that the Lute could not be used for accompaniment. 'The Lute players of the present age do not sing while playing, but try to obtain beauty by complicated sounds.' (近世琴家所謂操弄者、皆無歌辭、而繁聲以爲美; *Ch'in-shih*, cf. App. II, 2).

Often in the house of a Lute amateur a special room or bower is set apart for playing; such a place is called *ch'in-shih* 琴室, 'Lute Chamber.' A Ming treatise<sup>1)</sup> sets out the following conditions for such an abode: 'It should truly reproduce the tones, and not sound hollow. The best is a room in a storied building: there the boards of the ceiling ensure that the tones are not dispersed, and the empty space beneath makes the tones ring through. If one chooses a high hall or a spacious chamber, then the tones are dispersed and thin. And when one plays in a narrow room or in a small house the tones cannot ring through. If the building consists of only one floor, a big jar should be buried underneath. In this jar a bronze bell should be suspended, and then the jar should be covered by boards. Wise men living in retirement also take for their Lute Chamber tall pines and high bamboos, or a cavern in the rocks: in such a pure and airy abode in the serenity of nature and quiet surroundings, and especially when there is the impressive sight of a rivulet babbling over stones, the tones of the Lute shall win in clearness. Is not such a place like the Moon Palace of Wide Coolness?'<sup>2)</sup> It seems difficult to justify the

1) *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih* (cf. Appendix II, 3): 琴室。宜實、不宜虛、最宜重樓之下、蓋上有樓板則聲不散、其下空曠則聲透徹、若高堂大廈、則聲散漫、斗室小軒、則聲不遑、如平屋中、則於地下埋一大缸、缸中懸一銅鐘、上用板鋪、亦可、幽人逸士或於喬松修竹、岩洞石室、清曠之處、地清境寂、更有泉石之勝、則琴聲愈清、與廣寒月殿何異哉

2) Refers to a story told in the *Lung-ch'eng-lu* 龍城錄 (ascribed to the T'ang poet Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元, 773-819): Once the Emperor Ming-huang together with one of his Taoist masters made on a full-moon night a journey to the moon, where he found a palace called "Abode of Wide Coolness and Pure Emptiness" 廣寒清虛之府. This magic journey is the subject of a well-known Lute melody. See below, Chapter IV.

suggestion for burying a jar with a bell by the laws of acoustics, but it must have appealed to the imagination of the lovers of Lute Music. Other Ming authors<sup>1)</sup> criticize this statement, which seems to be based on a story told about the Han poet Ssû-ma Hsiang-ju (2nd century A.D.): he used to play the Lute on a special terrace called Ch'in-t'ai. When later the state Wei attacked Shu, and soldiers camped on that place and dug trenches, they found more than twenty big jars, which had served to make the music resound.<sup>2)</sup>

Finally we have to consider in greater detail the tendency to keep the study of the Lute reserved to a small circle of the elect.

Above I quoted some rules which restrict the number of persons to whom the Lute may be taught. With regard to this group of qualified persons the expression *ch'in-shê* 琴社 is often met with in the literature on the Lute. This literally means: 'Lute Association'. When the term is used for a group of amateurs of the Lute who happen to live in the same district, and who are in regular contact with each other, this translation suffices. But generally the word *shê* in this expression has a much wider meaning; as this special significance is not indicated in dictionaries, I will treat it here in some detail.

Especially since the latter half of the Ming dynasty, in circles of scholars of elegant interests and cultivated taste, who were connoisseurs of raising chrysanthemums, of flower arrangement, of appreciating incense, of nursing orchids etc., there came into existence a fixed tradition, canonizing the right methods for pursuing these hobbies, and especially the right mental attitude to be adopted towards them. Some scholars noted down these traditions, which were called *yo* 約, Covenants, or Rules. So the well-known essayist Chang Ch'ao (張潮, style: Shan-lai 山來, 17th cent.) wrote a *Wan-yüeh-yo* 玩月約, 'Rules for enjoying the Moon', Chiang Chih-lan (江之蘭, style: Shê-chêng 舍徵) wrote a *Wên-fang-yo* 文房約, 'Covenant of the Library'.<sup>3)</sup> A *Ch'in-yo* 琴約, 'Covenant for the Lute' will be found below, in Section 4 of this chapter. Such treatises on various subjects dear to the literatus bear a very personal character, and are mostly written in a chatty vein, contrary to those called *pu* 譜 or *shih* 史 which

1) *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* (cf. Appendix II, 6), ch. 3: 前輩理琴處、或埋瑟于地下、此說恐妄傳

2) *Ch'ien-ch'üeh-chü-lei-shu* 潛確居類書 (publ. 1630), ch. 79: 司馬相如好鼓琴、有琴臺在浣溪正路、金花寺北、魏伐蜀、于此下營、掘堊得大甕二十餘口、蓋以響琴也

3) Both these treatises are to be found in the *T'an-chi-ts'ung-shu* 檀几叢書, a collection of the works of various minor authors of the Ch'ing period, published in 1695 by Wang Cho 王暉. All the books reprinted in it are important for the study of the domestic life and leisurely pastimes of the literati.



strive to be more scientific.

Now the term *shê* may be considered as being an expansion of *yo*: *shê* denotes the total of all people who know and faithfully observe the rules fixed by tradition for the pursuance of some elegant hobby. It does not imply any social or local unity: anyone who raises chrysanthemums in the correct way is a member of the *Chü-shê* 菊社, 'Spiritual Association of Lovers of the Chrysanthemum', whether he lives in Peking or in Canton, or anywhere else. In such cases *shê* is perhaps best translated as 'Spiritual Community'. We find, e.g., a booklet entitled: *Chü-shê-yo* 菊社約, 'Covenant of the Spiritual Community of the Chrysanthemum lovers', and another called *Ku-huan-shê-yo* 古歡社約, 'Covenant of the Spiritual Community of the Booklovers'.<sup>1)</sup> Books of this class form a special branch in Chinese literature, important because, next to the novels, they are sources of valuable data on the private life of the literary class.

As the Lute was so highly valued by the literati, it goes without saying that in the handbooks for the Lute the *Ch'in-shê* is repeatedly referred to. In the *Ch'in-ching* the rules indicating to whom and where the Lute may be played are prefaced by a short notice, entitled *Ch'in-shê*, saying: 'In a modest dwelling<sup>2)</sup> there should be a stand for laying the Lute on, and a case for storing it away. There should be a flywhisk, a sonorous stone, brushes and ink to keep the Lute company and there should be lustrous flowers and cranes to be its friends. All these things belong to the domain<sup>3)</sup> of the Lute. Those who are not in this class do not belong to the Spiritual Community of the Lute.' 琴社。環堵案置以受桐、宛磬翰墨以侶桐、瓊葩偃禽桐之侑也、江風山月桐之供也、此皆通籍于嶧陽者也、非此族也不在社黨

The same book on the next page describes which people are qualified for being considered as members of the *Ch'in-shê*; in conclusion I translate this passage.

'All who study the Lute must be accomplished scholars, and they must be good at reciting poetry.

1) The *Chü-shê-yo* was written by Ti I 狄億, the *Ku-huan-shê-yo* by Ting Hsiung-fei 丁雄飛; both books are to be found in the *T'an-chi-ts'ung-shu*, mentioned above. The latter contains some very sane suggestions for bibliophiles: If a book is borrowed it may not be kept longer than a fortnight; one should not entrust a borrowed book to someone else to return it, 借書不得逾半月, 還書不得托人轉到.

2) huan-tu, cf. Book of Rites, Li-chi, Ch. XXXVIII, 10.

3) t'ung-chi 通籍, lit. a signboard hanging near the gate of the Palace, on which were written the name and full description of those people who were allowed to go in and out freely; i-yang 嶧陽, lit. 'on the southern slope of the I-mountain,' the place of origin of the Lute: a Mythical Emperor was said to have found there the right sort of wood for making the first Lute.

Their appearance should be pure and detached, suggesting antique originality ; they may not be coarse and vulgar.

Their minds should be benign and tender, they should be virtuous and righteous, able to be content even in poverty, and always firmly clinging to their principles.

Their words should be true and reliable, they should not strive after superficial beauty or after obtaining a thin varnish of culture.<sup>1)</sup>

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1) 凡學琴必須要有文章能吟咏者、貌必要有清奇古怪不粗俗者、心必要有仁慈德義能、甘貧守志者、言必要有誠信無浮華飾者

#### 4. SELECTED TEXTS.

The five texts relating to ch'in ideology translated below are purposely taken from sources that in both date and quality differ widely.

The first is the section on the Lute taken from the chapter on music of the *Fêng-su-t'ung-i* (風俗通義, chapter VI), a miscellaneous collection of encyclopedic character, compiled by Ying Shao (應劭, style: Chung-yüan 仲遠, second century A.D.). This text furnishes us with a good example of the pure Confucianist view.

The second text is a small treatise by a well-known Confucianist scholar of the Yüan dynasty, Wu Ch'ên (吳澄, style: Yu-ch'ing 幼清, 1249-1331), author of many learned books on the Classics. These two texts are both written in a polished literary style, as befits the high scholarly standing of their authors.

Their style contrasts sharply with that of the clumsily written third text, being one of the introductory chapters of a handbook for the Lute dating from the Ming dynasty.<sup>1)</sup> This book was compiled by Yang Piao-chêng, a professional Lute expert of very low scholarly standing; evidently he has difficulty in expressing his thoughts freely in the literary medium, and often relapses in colloquial expressions. Still, as he was a clever musician, who knew how to recast the famous old tunes in a simpler, but yet charming form (such as might be executed also by mediocre Lute players), and because of the extraordinary great number of copies in which his book was printed, it was one of the most popular handbooks of the Ming period. Even now copies can be easily purchased in Chinese and Japanese bookshops.

The chapter that I have chosen here for translation is interesting because it shows the quaint admixture of heterogeneous elements that ch'in ideology had come to be.

The same general remarks hold good for the fourth text, one of the

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1) For characters and further particulars cf. Appendix II, No. 12. and No. 14.

introductory chapters of the *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu*, a handbook which may be called the most popular guide for Lute players during the Ch'ing dynasty. The editor of this book was also a mediocre scholar, but an excellent musician. The versions of the tunes given here are very attractive, and rich in subtle nuances. Moreover there have been added to the notation special marks, indicating the rhythm. It is still the handbook most widely used by Lute players today, and may be obtained at very little cost in China and Japan.

The book of Yang Piao-chêng was an individual production: this handbook, however, is a typical example of a ch'in-pu that was composed by a group of students, gathered round a famous master (cf. for more details Appendix II, No. 14). The editor was not a great stylist: he patched together several passages from others sources without being able to produce smoothly running prose. In his preface, printed in his own handwriting, he tries to cover the meagre contents by using all kinds of strange and antiquated characters, instead of the ordinary forms, a process which, when indulged in too much, is condemned as vulgar by Chinese literati.

The fifth text is a *Pact for Transmitting the Lute*, a treatise of the type discussed *supra*, page 68. The author is Ch'êng Yün-chi (程允基, style: Yü-shan 寓山, 18th century), who is also the compiler of a ch'in handbook, the *Ch'êng-i-t'ang-ch'in-pu* (誠一堂琴譜, preface dated 1705).

For other texts from various sources which illustrate the principles of ch'in ideology, the reader is referred to below, Chapter VI, Section 4: *Some famous stories and much-quoted passages relating to the Lute*.

## THE LUTE

by Ying Shao, second century A.D.

Reverently I read in the Shih-pên<sup>1)</sup>: Shên-nung made the Lute. In the Book of History: Shun played the five-stringed Lute, and sang the song 'Southern Wind', and the Realm was regulated. In the Book of Odes it is said: 'I have elegant guests, the sê is played, the Lute is played'.

The accomplished Lute includes all music, it embraces all of the eight sorts of sounds<sup>2)</sup>. Of those things the Superior Man always has around him, he loves the Lute best, and he does not suffer it to be separated from him.

The Lute need not necessarily be displayed in the Ancestral Hall

1) A treatise by Liu Hsiang (劉向, B.C. 77-6), lost since early times.

2) I. e. the sounds of the instruments made of stone, metal, silk, bamboo, wood, skin, gourd, and clay.



or during the clan-festivals, it is not like bells and drums that must needs be suspended on carved standards. Though (the Lute be played) in a poor dwelling or a desolate street, deep in the mountains or in a profound valley, it will loose nothing (of its true meaning).

The Lute is considered to hold the mean between great and small music, and its tones are harmonious. Its heavy sounds are not boisterous so as to be confusing, its light sounds are not too weak so as to be inaudible. It is suited for harmonizing the human mind, and may move man to the improvement of his heart. Therefore, the word 'Lute' means 'restraining,' and the word 'accomplished' means 'rectifying,' indicating that the Superior Man keeps to the Right by restraining himself. By right and accomplished sounds, Right thoughts are instigated, therefore the good heart is victorious, and falsehood and wickedness are repressed. Therefore the Holy Sages and Superior Men of ancient times carefully watched over their emotions; and when falsehood arose they restrained it; when they met with something good they made it their own. When they had leisure they could act freely because they had perfected their thoughts. When there was something that oppressed them, when their Way was obstructed, so that they could not practise it, or again when they could not execute their teachings when serving the State, then (all these things) they expressed in the Lute, in order to give vent to their thoughts, and proclaim them to posterity. The songs they composed when they were able to practise their Way they called Hymns, by this term expressing the Beauty and elevatedness of the Way they practised. They did not grant themselves one moment rest, they were neither overbearing nor effusive, they loved Rites, but they did not try to exalt their own thoughts. The songs they composed when oppressed and melancholy they called Elegies, by this name indicating that even when meeting with disasters or falling into danger, when being oppressed and reduced to necessity, although steeped in sorrow and unable to reach their aims, they still kept to the Rites and Righteousness, without fear and without misgivings, rejoicing in the Way and not losing their consistency.

When Po Tzû-ya<sup>1)</sup> played the Lute, Chung Tzû-ch'î listened. When Po Tzû-ya in his thoughts dwelled on high mountains, Tzû-ch'î said: 'How excellent! Impressing like the T'ai-shan!' When a moment later Tzû-ya in his thoughts dwelled by flowing streams, Tzû-ch'î again said: 'How excellent! Broad and flowing like rivers and streams!'

1) One of the most famous Lute players of antiquity; for more details v. chapter IV: *The Significance of the Tunes*.

When Tzû-ch'i died, Po Ya broke his Lute and tore the strings, and all his life did not play any more, since he now deemed the world not enough to play for.

At present the length of the Lute is four feet and five inches, thus featuring the Four Seasons and the Five Elements. The seven strings symbolize the Seven Stars.

琴。謹按世本、神農作琴、尙書、舜彈五絃之琴、歌南風之詩、而天下治、詩云、我有嘉賓、鼓瑟鼓琴、雅琴者、樂之統也、與八音並行、然君子所常御者、琴最親密、不離於身、非必陳設於宗廟鄉黨、非若鐘鼓羅列於虞懸也、雖在窮閭陋巷、深山幽谷、猶不先琴、以爲琴之大小得中、而聲音和、大聲不譁人而流漫、小聲不湮滅而不聞、適足以和人意氣、感人善心、故琴之爲言禁也、雅之爲言正也、言君子守正以自禁也、夫以正雅之聲、動感正意、故善心勝、邪惡禁、是以古之聖人君子、慎所以自感、因邪禁之、適故近之、間居則爲從容以致思焉、如有所窮困、其道閉塞、不得施行、及有所通達而用事、則著之於琴、以舒其意、以示後人、其道行和樂而作者、命其曲曰暢、暢者、言其道之美暢、猶不敢自安、不驕不溢、好禮不以暢其意也、其遇閉塞憂愁而作者、命其曲曰操、操者、言遇舊遭害、困厄窮迫、雖怨恨失意、猶守禮義、不懼不懾、樂道而不失其操者也、伯子牙方鼓琴、鍾子期聽之、而意在高山、子期曰善哉乎、巍巍若泰山、頃之間而意在流水、鍾子又曰善哉乎、湯湯若江河、子期死、伯牙破琴絕絃、終身不復鼓、以爲世無足爲音聲也、今琴長四尺五寸、法四時五行也、七絃者、法七星也。

### TEN RULES FOR PLAYING THE LUTE

by Wu Ch'ên, 1249-1331.

I. When laying the Lute on the table one should see that it sticks out on the right side a hand's breadth, so that one may easily turn the tuning pegs. If one seats oneself exactly opposite the fifth stud, then one can freely execute all the movements of the left and right hand.

II. The right hand when attacking the strings should not go farther to the left than the fourth stud: when one attacks the strings near the bridge, the tones produced will be true. The finger technique should not be floating, nor should it be heavy and confused. The right hand should touch the strings lightly, but the left hand should press them down firmly.

III. When one plays the Lute, regardless of whether there are other people present or not, one must always behave as if one were in the presence of a superior. The body should be erect and straight, the spirit should be clear, the mind at rest, the look concentrated, the thoughts serene. Then the touch of the fingers naturally is correct, and the strings emit no wrong sounds.

IV. When producing sounds one should aim at simplicity, and also at naturalness. Its wonderfulness lies in the correct shifting over from

the light touch to the heavy, and in applying correctly *ritardando* and *accelerando*. When the finger technique is applied clumsily and wrongly, the measure not rigidly observed, and when one is striving after specious effects, the melody is spoilt and confused. These are all deficiencies, which should fundamentally be corrected.

V. The basis of the Lute consists in simplicity and serenity. Therefore one should not try to add extra sounds, but rigidly observe the indications for the finger technique : then one shall get a solemn, controlled style of playing, worthy to be seen. If one does not take care in attacking the strings to discriminate between flesh sounds and nail sounds, if the various movements are not linked up correctly, and if, moreover, while executing the attack with the thumb, chords, upward and downward *harpeggio*, the hand and arm are stiff and not correctly adjusted, then one has not yet achieved the wonderful finger technique.

VI. The quality of the Lute tends to loftiness. Therefore, if while playing one changes one's mien and allows the eyes to wander, or worse, if the body is stooping, the feet put one on top of the other, the head shaking, the shoulders moving up and down, then an atmosphere of unelegance is created. Knowing these deficiencies one should correct them. Moreover, when the sentiments are not elated, all kind of flaws and shortcomings arise, and one had better give up the Lute altogether.

VII. When the ancients composed tunes for the Lute, they sometimes aimed at expressing leisurely and satisfied feelings, but sometimes they wished to express their melancholy. Therefore one must understand the meaning of a tune. If one just plays the music as it is written, one will not be able to express the sentiments of the composer. And how shall then the mood of the ancients be found in the wood and the silk ?

VIII. In studying the Lute, getting down to the essence is the most important. If one tries to learn too much (at one time), how then shall one be able to grasp the essence ? Therefore, if one has succeeded in getting an eminent Master to teach some tunes, one should play these same tunes through again and again, lest one forget the significance inherent in them. Moreover, wonderful music arises from constant practice. This is what is meant by the saying that only by incessant application can one derive satisfaction from the strings. If not, then because one studies too many different tunes, the shortcomings shall be many, and it shall be as if thorns grew on one's fingers.

IX. The saying 'Rigidly observe the rites by respecting the Way,' means, when applied to Lute playing, not to play when there is wind or

rain, or in a common atmosphere. But if one meets someone who understands the deeper meaning of music, or having ascended a storied building, or a mountain, if one rests in a valley, sits on a rock, or tarries by a stream, or when the two original principles are in harmony, then all these conditions are to be called excellent and suited for the Lute. On the contrary, the presence of a vulgar man, a courtesan, an actor, a drunken and noisy atmosphere, these all are bad conditions for playing the Lute. Therefore one should be discreet in choosing the time and place to play the Lute.

X. Playing the Lute is meant for nurturing the nature, therefore one should not aim at acquiring fame by it. If one meets a kindred spirit, then one should play; if not, then one had better put the Lute in its cover, and reserve it for one's own enjoyment. If one plays the Lute before people who do not like it, or before disorderly and vulgar persons, who boast of their qualities, how can one not be ashamed? In such a case one cannot but hastily conceal the fact that one plays the Lute.

琴言十則。一、置琴案上軫前須容掌許、以便轉軫、身坐正對五徽、則左右手往來通便  
一、彈絃不得過四徽、蓋近岳則聲實故也、下指不得浮漂、亦不得重濁、入絃欲淺、按絃欲實  
一、鼓琴時無間有人無人、常如對長者在、身須端直、且神解、意閒、視專、思靜、自然指不虛、下絃不錯鳴、  
一、取聲欲淡、又欲自然、其妙在於輕重切當緩急得宜、若布指拙惡節奏疏懶與技巧多端聲調煩雜、皆琴之疵繆、不可不戒  
一、琴資簡靜、無增容聲、然須理會手勢、則威儀可觀、若按絃不問甲肉、前指不副後指、而且舉擡拂歷掌腕踣探無法、是尚未得妙指、雖在彈、奚以爲哉  
一、琴品欲高、若撫琴時、色變、視流、甚至偃身疊足、搖首、舞臀、氣象殊覺不雅、即知而禁之、則又神情不暢瑕纇叢生、不如己之可也  
一、古人製曲、或怡情自適、或憂憤傳心、須要識其意旨、若徒取聲、則情與製違、古人風調、何有於絲桐之間  
一、琴學貴精、多則便不能精、如從明師學得數曲、當時時調弄、既不失其遺意、而且妙音出於熟習、所謂密爾自娛於斯絃也、不然多學多廢、寧免手生荆棘何  
一、曰盡禮以尊其道、如風雨市塵不彈是也、至遇知音、升樓閣、登山、憩谷、坐石、遊泉、值二氣之清朗、皆際勝而宜於琴者、反是而對俗子、娼優、與夫酒穢塵囂、皆惡景也、自當善藏其用  
一、彈琴養性、非取必於人知、故有好而邀者、宜爲一鼓、不則囊琴自適而已、若奏曲不好之前、與誇能流俗之士、亦幾無恥、亟須靜晦

#### MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON PLAYING THE LUTE.

by Yang Piao-chêng, sixteenth century.

The meaning of the Lute is restraining the false and bringing back to the Right, in order to harmonize the heart of man. Therefore the



Holy Sages made the Lute for regulating their persons and for nurturing the harmony of their emotions. Restraining wanton extravagance, and rejecting excessive luxury, one should cherish the Music of the Holy Sages, that thereby one may learn the mysterious wonder of their souls, and so rejoice in their thoughts.

Whosoever plays the Lute must choose a pure dwelling or a spacious hall ; or he must ascend a storied building ; or he may tarry by trees and rocks, or climb a steep cliff ; or again he may ramble along the verduous bank of a stream, or he may dwell in a monastic abode.

When the two essences of nature are balanced, lofty and clear, on a night when there is a cool breeze and a brilliant moon, he must burn incense in a quiet abode. He must steady his heart, introvert his thoughts, so that soul and body are in complete harmony. Then only shall his soul communicate with the spirit of Nature, and he shall be in harmony with the wonderful Way.

If there is not present a man who understands the (inner meaning of) music, one had better play to the cool breeze and to the brilliant moon, to the dark-green pines and quaintly-shaped stones, to an ape of the mountain tops or to an old crane. Then one naturally grasps the inner meaning of this music. When one knows its meaning, one understands its tendency ; when one understands its tendency, then one may (truly) understand the music. Though the music be technically well executed, if its tendency is not understood, what benefit shall it give ? It is nothing more than a big noise, that avails nothing.

In the first place one's personality should be aloof (from all material things), and still elegant, and one's bearing must be pure. Further, the finger technique should be correct, the touch should be correct, the mouth should be bearded and the belly full of ink [i.e. one should be a mature literatus]. Only when these six qualities are all provided for may one take part in the Way of the Lute.

If one wishes to play the Lute, one should first see that one is dressed correctly : either a gown of crane-feathers, or a ceremonial robe. (For) only if one knows the appearance of the Holy Sages shall one be able to appreciate their instrument (i.e. the Lute). Next one should wash the hands, burn incense ; then one should approach the table and lay the Lute on its stand. One should be seated opposite the fifth stud, in such a way that this stud faces the heart of the player. Then both hands should be lifted. The heart is regulated, the body is steadied, it does not incline to right or left, or sway forward or backward. The feet should be planted on the earth like the stance of an archer.

One should take care that the right hand touches the correct string, and that the movements of the left hand are correct. The hands should be kept low and evenly balanced ; they should not be raised unduly high. Left and right hand should touch the strings on the places indicated by the studs (in such a way that) the right hand is near the bridge ; the nails of the hand should not be long, but just about the breadth of one grain. The strings should be touched half by the flesh and half by the nail : then the sound is not dry, but clear and rich. (The left hand) should press the board as if it would penetrate the wood. The outward and inward touch of the thumb, index and middle finger of the right hand, the vibrato, vibrato ritardando of the left hand, and the quick movements of the right hand over one or more strings, all these touches should be fully expressed, they should not be executed loosely and hastily, to give the impression of a light and flowing style. If one aims at specious dexterity and playing to the eye of the public, one had better leave the Lute alone and take to acting ; if one aims at producing ornate tones that captivate the ear, one had better drop the Lute and take to the cither.

The greatest emphasis must be laid on (distinguishing between) the light and heavy, the swift and slow touch, and between the decrescendo and crescendo.

When one's self is naturally aloof and earnest, then one shall correspond to the Mystery of the Way, and one's soul shall melt together with the Way. Therefore it is said that successfully executing music is not caused by the hands, but by the heart, that music is not produced by notes, but by the Way. When one does not strive to express music in tones, but lets it come naturally, then one may experience the Harmony of Heaven and Earth, then one may be in communication with the virtue of the Universal spirit.

Also it is said : The vibrato, the vibrato ritardando, the ascending and the descending attack of the left hand, the light or the heavy, the swift or the slow touch of the right hand, all these things can hardly be explained in words. They can be understood only by a man of learning.

彈琴雜說。琴者禁邪歸正以和人心、是故聖人之制將以治身育其情性和矣、抑乎淫蕩、去乎奢侈、以抱聖人之樂、所以微妙在得夫其人而樂其趣也、凡鼓琴必擇淨室高堂、或升層樓之上、或於林石之間、或登山嶺、或遊水湄、或觀宇中、值二氣高明之時、清風明月之夜、梵香靜室坐定心不外馳、氣血和平、方與神合靈、與道合妙、不遇知音、寧對清風明月、蒼松、怪石巖猿老鶴而鼓耳、是爲自得其樂也、如是鼓琴須要解意、知其意則知其趣、知其趣則知其樂、不知音趣、樂雖熟、何益、徒多無補、先要人物風韻標格清楚、又要指法好、取音好胸次好、口上要有絳、肚裏要有墨、六者兼備、方與添琴道、如要鼓琴、要先須衣冠整齊、或鶴氅、或深衣、要知古人之像表、方可稱聖人之器、然後盥水焚香、方纔就榻以琴、近案、

座以第五徽之間、當對其心、則兩方舉指法、其心身要正、無得左右傾欹前後仰合其足履地若射步之、宜右視其手、左顧其絃、手腕宜低平、不宜高昂、左右要對微、右手要近岳、指甲不宜長、只骨一米許、甲肉要相半、其聲不枯、清潤得宜、按令入木、劈托抹挑勾踢吟猱、輪鎖歷之法、皆盡其力、不宜飛撫作勢輕薄之態、欲要手勢花巧以好看、莫若推琴而就擲、若要聲音艷麗而好聽、莫若奏琴而彈箏、此爲琴之大忌也、務要輕重疾徐卷舒、自若體態尊重、方能與道妙會神與道融、故曰德不在手、而在心、樂不在聲、而在道、興不在音、而自然、可以感天地之和、可以合神明之德、又曰左手吟猱綽注、右手輕重疾徐、更有一般難說、其人須要讀書

## ON THE LUTE OF HIGH ANTIQUITY

from the Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu, publ. 1721.

In olden times when Fu Hsi ruled<sup>1)</sup> all under Heaven, he looked upwards and contemplated, he looked downwards and investigated. Through his supernatural influence he made the Map rise from the Yung river (cf. *Shu-ching*, ch. Ku-ming, 19), and accordingly he drew the Eight Triagrams. Then listening to the winds of the Eight Directions he made the sonorous tubes.<sup>2)</sup> On the I mountain<sup>3)</sup> he selected a lonely dryandra tree, and making the Yin principle complete the Yang principle, he created the Elegant Music, calling it Lute.

Lute means "restraining", that is to say restraining falsehood and guarding against wantonness. It further implies bringing to the fore benevolence and righteousness, and causing the return to the Way, it is a means for cultivating the person and regulating the mind, it makes man return to what is truly of Heaven in him,<sup>4)</sup> it makes him forget his earthly shape and reunites him with Emptiness. The spirit becomes concentrated, and melts into the Great Harmony.<sup>5)</sup>

The Lute is made to measure three feet six inches and five tenths. This symbolizes the 365 degrees of the celestial sphere, and the 365 days of the year. Its breadth is six inches, symbolizing the six harmonies.<sup>6)</sup> It has an upper and a lower part, which symbolize the interchanging breath of Heaven and Earth. The upper part of the bottom is called pond,

1) One of the mythical Emperors, said to have lived in the third millennium B.C. The map is said to have shown the eight triagrams *pa-kua* (the base of the Book of Changes, *Yi-ching*), and some other mystic drawings; it was drawn on the back of a dragon-horse which rose from the waves.

2) The twelve Lü 律呂, bamboo tubes of various dimensions, which were said to produce the 12 chromatic semitones of the octave, and which since ancient times have formed the basis of Chinese musical theory.

3) A mountain in Shantung province.

4) Quoted from the opening lines of the *Ch'in-tiao* 琴操, cf. appendix II, No. 1.

5) Quoted from Lieh-tzû, see above p. 44.

6) I. e. Heaven, Earth, and the four cardinal points.

the lower part pool. Pond means water ; water is even. Pool means to submit, [the two thus meaning] if the people on high are even (i.e. just) the people below will be obedient. The front is broad, the backpart is narrow, symbolizing the difference that exists between the venerable and the common. The upper board is concave, symbolizing Heaven, the lower board is flat, designating Earth.

The Dragon-pond (see below, p. 100) measures eight inches, to let pass the winds of the eight directions. The Phoenix-pool (see below p. 100) measures four inches, to unite in it the four seasons. There are five strings, to correspond to the five tones, and to symbolize the five elements. The thick strings are the Prince, they are slow, harmonious, and unobtrusive. The thinner ones are the Statesmen, they are pure, unselfish, and obedient. The two strings that were added later are called Wên and Wu, and by their elegance they express the decorous feelings between Prince and Statesman. Kung is the Prince, Shang is the Statesman, Chio is the People, Chih stands for affairs, and Yü for things in general.<sup>1)</sup> When these five tones together depict the Right, then the realm will be well regulated, and the numerous people will be peaceful.

Thus is the influence of the Accomplished Music on man : his nature is made to return to the Right, Prince and Statesmen shall be righteous, parents and children shall love each other, falsehood and low desires disappear, and man returns to his true heavenly nature.

The [licentious] music of Chêng brings doubt to man : in his nature, which is [originally] serene, false and wanton thoughts are born, the difference between man and woman is confused, and a propensity to licence is instigated.

Therefore, by contemplating the Lute and by listening to its music (in a certain place or time) one may behold the disposition of the people and the condition of government (in that place or at that time), and one may know whether in the world the Way flourishes or is decaying.

Shun played the five-stringed Lute, and sang the song Nan-fêng, and in order to give peace to the minds of all under heaven he composed the T'ai-p'ing music. It is said in the *Ch'in-shu* : The Lute is an instrument that was created by Fu-hsi, and completed by Huang-ti. It symbolizes Heaven and Earth, and its use is to promulgate the wonderful Way. It contains the Spirit of Great Holiness, and produces the ninety sorts of sounds. First it was made with five strings ; later, during the reigns of King Wên and King Wu respectively, two more strings were added, to

1) Cf. *Yüeh-chi*, ch. I.



establish the chant of the Dragon and the Phoenix, and to penetrate the mystery of lower and higher spiritual agencies. Its tones are right, its essence harmonious ; although its size is small, its significance is great.

When the inner meaning of the Lute is understood, one may derive benefit from it. Through its influence people who are hasty shall become quiet, those who are quiet shall become harmonious. When the heart is harmonious and even, one is affected neither by sorrow nor by joy : one becomes in complete harmony with what is truly from heaven in one's nature. When this heavenly nature is clearly recognized, then the difference between human nature troubled by emotions, and original serenity, shall be made clear again, one shall not be confused any longer by life and death, nor shall one be affected by earthly laws.

The ancient Emperors and Enlightened Kings all understood profoundly (these mysterious qualities of the Lute). It has not yet been known for a man to hear the Right Music without being influenced by it. When formerly Master Hsiang<sup>1)</sup> pulled the Lute, the swimming fish rose from the water to listen, and (hearing the Lute Music of Po-ya)<sup>2)</sup> the six horses looked up from their fodder. Things that have a shape, and animals that have no speech, they all are influenced by the music of the Lute ; how much more than human beings ! So it was until the Right Music was lost and (people) turned away from the Way of the Lute.

The Lute may establish fortitude and harmonize the primordial spirit. Only Yao understood this, therefore he composed the hymn *Shên-jên*. Further the Lute may complete the Way, thereby establishing the minds of the weak and timorous. This is the meaning of the elegy *Ssü-ch'in*,<sup>3)</sup> composed by Shun, of the elegy *Hsiang-ling*,<sup>4)</sup> composed by Yü, and of the elegy *Hsün-tien*,<sup>5)</sup> composed by T'ang. Since the Ancient Emperors and the Enlightened Rulers, the heart has been rectified and the person has been cultivated, the state has been regulated and

1) *Shih-hsiang* was a famous Lute player of old, mentioned in *Lieh-tzu*, ch. T'ang-wên 湯問. This passage, however, gives the credit of making the fish come out of the water to another Lute expert, *Ku-pa*: When *Ku-pa* played the Lute, birds started to dance and fish jumped out of the water.

2) I have inserted the reference to Po-ya, since the final words are a quotation from *Hsün-tzu* 荀子, ch. *Ch'üan-hsüeh* 勸學, where it is said: When Po-ya played the Lute, the six horses looked up from their fodder: 伯牙鼓琴, 而六馬仰秣.

3) The *Ch'in-tiao* (cf. App. II, No. 1) says that the Emperor Shun composed this song to express his affection for his parents.

4) According to the *Shu-ching*, Yü composed this song when he had completed the task of regulating the waters.

5) Composed by Wu-wang of the Chou dynasty, to train people in military arts. Cf. the Sung treatise *Ch'in-chü-pu-lu* 琴曲譜錄: 習武事.

peace has been brought to the realm,<sup>1)</sup> by the right sounds of the Lute and by these alone. How then can one say that the wonderful way of the Lute is but a small craft? To consider the Way of the Lute as one of the arts is a great mistake indeed.

上古琴論。昔者伏羲之王天下也。仰觀俯察、感榮河出圖以畫八卦、聽八風以製音律、採嶧山孤桐、合陰備陽、造爲雅樂、名之曰琴。琴者禁也。禁邪僻而防淫佚、引仁義而歸正道、所以修身理性、返其天真、忘形合虛、凝神太和。琴製長三尺六寸五分、象周天三百六十五度、年歲之三百六十五日也、廣六寸、象六合也、有上下、象天地之氣相呼吸也、其底上曰池、下曰沼、池者水也、水者平也、沼者伏也、上平則下伏、前廣而後狹、象尊卑有差也、上圓象天、下方法地、龍池長八寸、以通八風、鳳沼長四寸、以合四氣、其絃有五、以按五音、象五行也、大絃者君也、緩和而隱、小絃者臣也、清廉而不亂、迨至文武加二絃、所以雅合君臣之恩也。宮爲君、商爲臣、角爲民、徵爲事、羽爲物、五音盡正、天下和平、而兆民寧、雅樂之感人也、性返于正、君臣義、父子親、消降邪欲、返乎天真、鄭聲之惑人也、正性邪、淫心生、亂男女之別、動聲色之偏、故視琴聽音、可以見志觀治、知世道之興衰、故舜彈五絃之琴、歌南風之詩、以平天下之心、爲太平之樂也、琴書曰琴之爲器、創自伏羲、成于黃帝、法象乎乾坤、用宣乎妙道、含大靈氣、運九十種聲、初製五絃、加於文武、建龍鳳之號、通鬼神之幽、其聲正、其氣和、其形小、其義大、如得其旨趣、則能感物、志躁者、感之以靜、志靜者、感之以和、和平其心憂樂不能入、任之以天真、明其真、而返照動寂、則生死不能累、方法豈能拘、古之明王君子、皆精通焉、未有聞正音而不感者也、昔者師襄鼓琴、則有遊魚出聽、六馬仰秣、有形之物、無語之獸、尙能感之、況於人乎、自正音失而琴道乖矣、琴能制剛、而調元氣、惟堯得之、故堯有神人暢、其次能全其道、則秦儒立志、舜有思親操、禹有襄陵操、湯有訓佃操者是也、自古帝明王、所以正心修身、齊家治國平天下者、咸賴琴之正音是資焉、然則琴之妙道、豈小技也哉、而以藝視琴道者、則非矣

### COVENANT FOR TRANSMITTING THE LUTE

by Ch'êng Yün-chi, 18th century

I. The Lute is the instrument of the Holy Sages: Superior Men therewith nurture the Essence of the Mean Harmony, cultivate their selves and regulate their nature. Playing the Lute must therefore be called a Way to wisdom and not one of the Arts. All who love the study of the Lute should wait till they meet (a pupil who is) a scholar of cultured taste and correct conduct: only then may they teach him the Lute. How could one speak about the Lute to people of frivolous and ostentatious disposition?

II. As the various schools of Lute Players are not the same, so their traditions are different. But the main point (which all schools have in common) lies in their strict observance of the rules of harmony, and in

1) Cf. *Ta-hsüeh* 大學, ch. I.

giving special care to the finger technique. Students of the Lute should (first) hear the style which the masters of various schools follow while playing, (for once having chosen a master) it is necessary that one wholeheartedly likes his style, and follows his precepts sincerely; then teaching and learning shall be well regulated. But if the student is over clever and self-conceited, he thinks himself better than his master.<sup>1)</sup> Further, if a student receives one method of playing, but at the same time he hears all kinds of different teachings,<sup>2)</sup> he cannot concentrate his mind; then one should not trouble to teach him.

III. When Confucius studied the Lute under Master Hsiang, (after the first lesson) he did not show himself for ten days; when Po-ya studied the Lute under Ch'êng-lien, during three years he did not make progress. Therefore, those who start studying the Lute must have a constant mind and a firm resolution, and they must be resolved to succeed in the end: only such people should be taught the Lute. But if there are such that come with great enthusiasm, but give up when they are halfway<sup>3)</sup> they are not worthy that a teacher occupy himself with them.

IV. The Lute is the instrument with which the Ancients nurtured their nature; they did not use it with the idea of making their livelihood by it. Now I often see that the Lute masters of the present time when they are about to teach somebody, immediately start talking about the salary: this is disgusting indeed, and drawing elegance through the mud. All who have the same attitude as I should guard themselves against this. Drawn up by Yü-shan.

傳琴約。一琴爲聖樂、君子涵養中和之氣、藉以修身理性、當以道言、非以藝言也、習琴之友、必期博雅端方之士、方可傳之、輕浮佻達者、豈可語此

一派既不同、傳亦各異、首嚴音律兼重指法、習琴者須令聽過各家、務要心悅誠服、然後授受分明、苟會心明敏者、何妨青出於藍、其或齊傳楚咻、志不專一、則亦不屑教誨之而已矣  
一孔子學琴於師襄、十日不進、伯牙學琴於成連、三年未成、初學者須要心堅志決、必期有成、方可傳習、其或乘興而來、半途而廢、亦不足取也

一琴爲古人養性之具、非以資糊口計也、每見時師傳授、輒講酬儀、鄙穢雜聞、風雅掃地矣、凡我同志、各宜戒之。寓山識

1) *Ch'ing-ch'u-yü-lan*, from Hsün-tzu 荀子, the opening line of Ch. I.

2) *Ch'i-ch'uan-ch'u-hsiu*, from Mencius, Book III, part II, 6.

3) *Pan-t'u-êrh-fei*, cf. *Chung-yung* 中庸, XI 2.

## CHAPTER THE FOURTH

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TUNES

The Ming repertoire taken as the basis for a study of the significance of the tunes—Significance of the modes— Chinese *tiao-i*, and Japanese *netori*— The tunes divided into five groups—1. Tunes describing a mystic journey (Taoistic)—2. Tunes of a semi-historical character (Confucianist)—3. Musical versions of literary productions—4. Tunes descriptive of nature—5. Tunes descriptive of literary life—Summary.

The Lute as a means of communing with Tao, the Lute as the favourite companion of the scholar, the Lute as the holy instrument of the Ancient Sages—all these various functions of the Lute, and the tenets of Lute ideology corresponding to them, are reflected in the repertoire: they find their expression in the subjects of the tunes.

Now, the Lute repertoire is different for every period: the various elements, both Chinese and foreign, that in the course of time influenced Lute music, to a large extent also determined its repertoire. In the high-day of Central Asiatic influence (the Sui and T'ang periods), more than half of the repertoire consisted of musical versions of songs of a very worldly character. But during the Sung dynasty, when under the influence of the philosopher Chu Hsi and his powerful school a more severe attitude reasserted itself, Lute tunes of a more classical character came to the fore. For our present subject, viz. a consideration of the extent to which the tenets of ch'in ideology may be found reflected in the tunes, we must take as the basis the repertoire of the Ming dynasty. For, as we have seen above, it was during the Ming dynasty that the outlines of this special system of thought were more or less fixed.



It was during the Ming period that there were printed on a large scale handbooks for the Lute with tunes in notation, accompanied by explicit commentaries as to their history and significance; thus from a study of the Ming repertoire we may obtain an idea not only of the melodies of these tunes, but also of what they meant to the people of those times.

Before studying the significance of the separate tunes, however, a few words must be said about the various modes (*tiao* 調) and their ideological value.

The handbooks of the Lute mostly divide the repertoire into the five modes, called after the old Chinese pentatonic scale (*kung-shang-chüeh-chih-yü* 宮商角徵羽), *kung-tiao* 宮調, *shang-tiao* 商調, etc. Next to these there exist scores of what might be called 'minor modes,' partly of foreign origin; these are called together *wai-tiao* 外調. For each mode the tuning of the strings is different.

Now in the Lute handbooks of the Ming dynasty each group of tunes belonging to the same mode is preceded by a short musical composition, that bears as title the name of the mode, with the word *i* 意 'meaning' added. So the collection of tunes belonging to the kung-mode opens with a short composition entitled *kung-i* 宮意 (or also *kung-tiao-i* 宮調意), 'Meaning of the Kung mode.' These *tiao-i* contain a fixed tonal pattern, characteristic of the mode they indicate, and constitute the essence of all tunes composed in this mode. Short as they are, these *tiao-i* comprise a great variety of tones, especially some chords and other harmonical combinations which are typical for the mode the *tiao-i* introduces. Usually a *tiao-i* ends with a simple melodic pattern, entirely in harmonics ('floating sounds' *fan-yin* 泛音: while the right hand pulls a string, the left just touches it lightly, without pressing it down on the board; cf. above, chapter III. 3, page 59).

These *tiao-i* provide the player with a convenient check upon the tuning of his instrument. Playing through the *tiao-i*, he notices at once whether the tuning is correct or not. At the same time the *tiao-i* is a kind of finger exercise: it contains all the main grips necessary for executing tunes set to this mode.

In ch'in ideology, however, the *tiao-i* mean much more than just melodic patterns: they are called *i* 意 'meaning,' because they convey to the player and the hearer the peculiar atmosphere, the emotional and philosophical value of each mode. A Lute expert of the Ming dynasty, Yang Lun 楊倫 in his handbook *T'ai-ku-i-yin* (cf. Appendix II, No. 13) adds to each *tiao-i* an introductory note. There he combines each mode

with one of the five elements *wu-hsing* 五行, and with one of the five virtues *wu-ch'ang* 五常. Then he connects each mode with a special manifestation of Tao, as they are explained in the Book of Changes, *Yih-ching*. So the whole scheme of the modes is placed in a cosmological frame. Playing the *tiao-i* may be called a preliminary ceremony: it prepares the player and the hearer for the real composition to come, it creates the correct atmosphere that belongs to the mode in which the composition is set.

The *tiao-i* are so intimately bound up with the tunes themselves, that in the Ming handbook *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (cf. Appendix II No. 10) most tunes end with the remark: 'Now add the harmonics of the *tiao-i* belonging to this mode' 入本調泛.

During the Ch'ing dynasty the *tiao-i* seem to have been neglected; as a rule they are not printed in the handbooks of that period. But a survival is to be found in the codas (*shou-yin* 收音, also called *wei* 尾) which in Ch'ing handbooks frequently are added to the tunes. These codas are entirely in harmonics, and for each mode closely resemble the passages in harmonics of the corresponding *tiao-i* of the Ming handbooks. The function of these codas is essentially the same as that of the *tiao-i*: while the *tiao-i* prepares the player and the hearer for the mode of the tune that is going to follow, the codas are retrospective, and, as it were, resume in one single passage the entire spirit of the mode to which the tune played belongs.

The *tiao-i* are doubtless very old. This may be concluded from the fact that although the tunes themselves as given in the early Ming handbooks differ greatly, the *tiao-i* are practically uniform. In Japan they are still used in the ceremonial Court music where they are called *netori* 音取, or also *torine* 取音<sup>1)</sup>. The *tiao-i* of the Lute supply us with valuable materials for a study of ancient Chinese composition: in my opinion an investigation of the history of Lute music should begin with a thorough analysis of the various *tiao-i* that are preserved.

For the study of the significance of the tunes themselves the handbooks of the Lute supply ample materials. Usually to each tune given in notation there is added a preface, where the compiler of the handbook gives the name of the composer, and adds some remarks about the occasion that inspired him to compose the tune in question. Special care is given to describing the mood the composer was in when he created his music, and what thought he wished to express in his composition. It is the highest aim of the player in his execution of the tune to reproduce faithfully the

1) For more information about the *netori* cf. H. Tanabe, *Nihon-ongaku-kōwa* 田邊尚雄, 日本音樂講話, Tōkyō 1921, p. 515 sq.

mood of the composer. Each tune has its special significance, which must be done full justice by the player.

To help the player to realize the significance, often the various parts of a tune (*tuan* 段) are given special titles, suggesting the meaning of that particular part of the melody.

As a rule these subtitles are not especially made for the Lute melodies: they are fixed phrases, borrowed from a separate section of the Chinese artistic vocabulary, viz. that of the *t'i-mu* 題目 'superscriptions'. A *t'i-mu* is a short, highly pregnant phrase, a conventionalized expression that describes a subject considered fit for inspiring an artist. A *t'i-mu*, such as for instance 'A waterfall descending from pine-clad rocks' 松岩飛瀑 may inspire alike poets, painters and musicians. Looking through a catalogue of paintings (e.g. the *Li-tai-cho-lu-hua-mu* 歷代著錄畫目, publ. in 1933 by John C. Ferguson) one finds hundreds of these *t'i-mu*. Because of their pregnancy these phrases are by no means easy to translate; in the examples given below my translation often is but one of many possible renderings. Many handbooks add to these subtitles some remarks about the style: whether the touch must be slow, energetic, delicate, etc. Further there are many stylistic indications, which correspond to our piano, legato, forte and so on.

Sometimes even to every bar there are appended explanatory remarks. We find, for instance, in a tune describing a beautiful mountain landscape, under a bar in the first part the remark 'Here one thinks of high mountains', and under another: 'Here one thinks of flowing streams.'

The better known tunes of the Ming repertoire number well over a hundred. From a musicological point of view, every one of these tunes constitutes valuable material for research. But for the study of ch'in ideology we need only consider a few of them. For a comparative study of the tunes shows that according to their subjects they may be conveniently divided over five groups, each group comprising a number of tunes of the same ideological type. Thus for our present subject it suffices to select for each group some representative tunes.

The tunes here selected for discussion number about twenty. In some way or another all serve to illustrate the ideals of ch'in ideology. Some express Taoist principles, others celebrate antiquity, and all suggest the atmosphere that surrounds the Lute and its music. Besides illustrating ch'in ideology the tunes discussed below, as they form the nucleus of the ch'in repertoire, will at the same time give the reader a general idea about the subjects that inspired Lute musicians. Most of the tunes mentioned here are often referred to in Chinese literature, and to this

day are still the favourites of every Chinese Lute amateur.

Above, in chapter III, section 2, it was remarked already that in ch'in ideology the Taoist element predominates. A cursory inspection of the subjects of the tunes shows that there also the tunes with a Taoist colour top the list. Most prominent among these Taoist tunes are those of a type which I would call that of

1. *The Mystic Journey*. The ethereal tones of the Lute loosen the soul of the player from its earthly bonds, and enable him to travel to the mystic heights where the Immortals dwell, and to be initiated into the secrets of the Elixir of Life.

A good example is a tune called *Kuang-han-yu* 廣寒遊 'Traveling to the Palace of Wide Coolness' (for this palace cf. above, on page 67, footnote 2), to be found in an early Ming handbook, the *Pu-hsü-t'ang-ch'in-pu* (步虛堂琴譜, cf. Appendix II, no. 11). The various stages of the mystic journey described in this tune are indicated in the titles of its eight parts: the traveler ascends into the clouds, feasts with the Immortals, and finally again returns to earth. 1. Treading the cloud ladder 步雲梯, 2. Ascending into pure emptiness 登清虛, 3. Feasting in the Pavilion of Wide (Coolness) 宴廣亭, 4. Cutting the cinnamon (used in preparing the elixir of immortality) 折丹桂, 5. Dancing in rainbow garments 舞霓裳, 6. Dancing with the Blue Phoenix 舞青鸞; in the middle of this part there occur some heavy chords, where the remark is added: 'The sound of the Jade Hare pounding the elixir of immortality.' According to Chinese popular belief in the moon there lives a hare, who under a cassia tree prepares the elixir of life. 7. Asking about Longevity 問長生, 8. Returning in the cloud chariot 回雲車; in the middle of this part there occur some high notes, with the explanatory remark: 'The sounds of laughing and talking of Chang-ngo, the Moon Goddess.'

The tune *Lieh-tzû-yü-feng* 列子禦風 'Lieh-tzû riding on the wind' may serve as a second example; it refers to a passage in the old Taoist work connected with the name of this philosopher (cf. above, translation on p. 44). This tune is to be found in most ch'in-pu, and is generally ascribed to Mao Chung-wêng 毛仲翁, a composer of the Sung dynasty, about whom little is known; only some of the more vulgar ch'in-pu ascribe it to the philosopher Lieh-tzû himself. The *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (神奇秘譜, cf. Appendix II no. 10) gives the titles of its ten parts as follows. 1. Resting upon emptiness, riding on the wind 凭虛馭風, 2. Looking down on the earth 俯視寰壤, 3. The universe is spread out vast 渺焉六合, 4. I do not know whether the wind is riding on me 不知風乘我, 5. Or whether I am riding on the wind 不知我乘風, 6. The mind dwells on mys-



terious plains 志在冲漠, 7. The spirit roams in the great purity 神遊太清, 8. Whistling long in the vast azure 長嘯空碧, 9. Shaking one's clothes in the breeze 振衣天風, 10. Having attained the utmost ecstasy, turning back 興盡而還.

Another well-known tune of this type, entitled Ling-hsü-yin 凌虛吟 'Song of Cool Emptiness' is also ascribed to Mao Chung-wêng (in the Ming handbook of Yang Piao-chêng, cf. Appendix II No. 12: other handbooks give it as anonymous). This tune consists of three parts: 1. Ascending in the clouds with a crane as vehicle 躡雲鶴駕 2. Riding on the wind up to the confines of heaven 乘風天表, 3. Treading the emptiness of the highest atmosphere 步虛太羅. Besides the examples quoted here there exist scores of other tunes belonging to this same group.

Under this group I would also classify another type of tunes that though not exactly representing a mystic journey, still are closely related to it. These are the many tunes celebrating life in refined retirement.

Taoist lore often describes the abode of the Immortals and other paradisaical regions as being in a specified location, as, e.g., far in the western mountains, or high up in the sky. But at the same time the unseen world pervades ordinary life: we are living constantly in close proximity to it, and we would clearly perceive it, could we but see with the soul instead of with the eyes. This idea has inspired countless Chinese writers: best known is the delicate essay by T'ao Ch'ien (陶潛, 365-427), entitled The Plum Blossom Fountain (桃花源記; translated by Giles in: *Gems of Chinese Literature, Prose*, Shanghai 1923 p. 104<sup>2)</sup>).

In this essay (really the introduction to one of his poems) T'ao Ch'ien relates how a fisherman happened upon a grove of peach trees; exploring this beautiful spot he found the hidden entrance to a cave. Having entered it he found that it led into a strange country: people there were living happily and peacefully, wearing the garb of several centuries ago. The fisherman was kindly treated by them, and resolved to return there. But once he had gone away he could never find his way back.

Tasting during earthly life already the joys of eternity is the privilege of the enlightened recluse, who, in his abode far from the loud world, returns to the simple life exalted by the Taoist writers. Thus the repairing of the sage to his mountain retreat, the scholar's rustic excursion, which makes him realize the futility of worldly hopes, the ecstasy of the

2) Giles' footnote: 'The whole story is allegorical, and signifies that the fisherman had been strangely permitted to go back once again into the peach blossom days of his youth' entirely misrepresents the purport of this essay, and should be disregarded.

recluse who by contemplating the forces of nature beholds the eternal Tao, all these motifs may be classified under the group of the mystic journey.

In connection with this motif two persons, the *ch'iao-jên* 樵人 Fuel Gatherer, and the *yü-fu* 漁父 the Old Fisherman figure prominently. They are the approved symbols of simple life in complete harmony with Tao, as opposed to the cares and sorrows of the world. Above we saw that it was an old fisherman that discovered the Peach Blossom Fountain. Already the philosopher Chuang-tzû uses the Old Fisherman as a symbol of the sage who has realized truth: in the chapter entitled *Yü-fu* the Old Fisherman appears '... his beard and eyebrows were turning white, his hair was all uncombed, and his sleeves hung idly down ...' He points out to Confucius the Right Way, after that '... He shoved off his boat, and went away among the green reeds' (Legge). Also in later literature the Old Fisherman and the Fuel Gatherer are preferably chosen for delivering wise words about the meaning of life. The great Sung writer and artist Su Shih (Su Tung-p'o) wrote the *Yü-ch'iao-hsien-hua* 漁樵閑話 'Leisurely Discourses of the Fuel Gatherer and the Fisherman,' and the famous scholar Shao Yung (邵雍, 1011-1077) of the same period, chose this pair to deliver his philosophical principles; cf. his *Yü-ch'iao-tui-wên* 漁樵對問 'Dialogue between the Fisherman and the Fuel Gatherer.'

In the repertoire of the Lute there occur many tunes that express this idea. As a first example I may mention the tune *Ch'iao-ko* 樵歌 'Song of the Fuel Gatherer,' to be found in most handbooks, and generally ascribed to Mao Min-chung 毛敏仲, a composer of the end of the Sung period. The *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (cf. Appendix II No. 10) says that Mao Min-chung composed this tune when fleeing from the Mongol invasion of China. The eleven parts bear the following subtitles: 1. Flying from the world, without sorrow 遯世無悶, 2. Proudly looking down on worldly affairs 傲睨物表, 3. Settling down far on cloudy mountain tops 遠棲雲嶠, 4. Shouldering one's axe entering the wood 斧斤入林, 5. Enjoying Tao while reading one's books 樂道以書, 6. Shaking one's clothes on a steep cliff 振衣似岡, 7. Whistling long in the echoing vale 長嘯谷答, 8. Singing the opportune wind 詠鄭公風 (for the exact meaning of the expression *chêng-kung-fêng* cf. *Hou-han-shu*, the biography of Chêng Hung 鄭宏), 9. Having obtained the true insight, whistling long 豁然長嘯, 10. Advanced in years like the long-lived pines 壽倚松齡, 11. In a drunken dance descending from the mountain 醉舞下山.

Secondly there is the *Yü-ko* 漁歌, 'Song of the Fisherman,' the pendant of the tune mentioned above. This tune is ascribed to the

great T'ang poet Liu Tsung-yüan (柳宗元, 773-819). In the handbook of Yang Piao-chêng (see above) this tune has not less than 18 parts, which bear the following subtitles: 1. Clouds over the rivers Hsiao and Hsiang (two rivers in Hunan province, famous for their beautiful scenery) 瀟湘水雲, 2. The autumn river is glossy like silk 秋江如練, 3. Mist and rain over lake Tung-t'ing (the famous lake in the north of Hunan province) 洞庭烟雨, 4. The misty waves of the river Hsiang 楚湘烟波, 5. The brilliant moon in the broad heaven 天濶月朗, 6. Antiphonal song of the fishermen 漁歌互答, 7. Cries of the wild geese 噉噉鳴雁, 8. At evening mooring near the western rock 夜傍西岩, 9. Evening-song of the fishermen 漁人晚唱, 10. Lying drunk among the rushes 醉臥蘆花, 11. Evening-rain outside the weed-grown window 蓬窓夜雨, 12. The falling leaves of the *wu-t'ung* tree 梧桐落葉, 13. At dawn drawing water from the Hsiang river 曉汲湘水, 14. The fishing boats are rowed out 漁舟盪槳, 15. Throwing the nets in the cool river 寒江撒網, 16. The sun appears, the mists dissolve 日出烟消, 17. A splashing sound of the oars 欸乃一聲, 18. Highness of the mountains and eternity of the streams 山高水長.

All tunes belonging to this first group correspond to that part of ch'in ideology that above I designated as mainly Taoistic in character. Those tunes that belong to the next group, however, bear a more Confucianist character. They often treat of Confucius and other saints of antiquity, and celebrate the conduct of historical persons.

2. *Tunes of a semi-historical character.* Under this group I classify all tunes that are connected with some famous person, or with a well-known historical theme. Among this category there must be mentioned in the first place the many compositions connected with Confucius. The Sage is said to have been a great Lute player, and according to tradition he composed several Lute melodies at critical moments of his eventful life. As a specimen I mention the famous old tune *I-lan* 猗蘭 'Alas! the Orchid.' This tune is already mentioned in a catalogue of ch'in tunes of the Han dynasty, the *Ch'in-tsao* (cf. Appendix II, no. 1), the oldest list of ch'in tunes that exists. There it is said: 'The elegy *I-lan* was composed by Confucius. He had visited in succession all the Feudal Princes, but none of them could employ him. Returning from Wei to (his native state) Lu, he passed a hidden vale, and there observed a fragrant orchid flourishing alone. Heaving a sigh he said: In truth, the orchid should be the perfume of kings, but now it is flourishing alone as a mate of common plants. It might be compared with the wise man, who finds that the times are not suited for practising his principles, and (consequently) associates with the common people.'

Having said this he halted his chariot, and drawing his Lute near him, he composed a tune on the orchid' 猗蘭操者、孔子所作也。孔子歷聘諸侯、諸侯莫能任、自衛反魯、過隱谷之中、見猗蘭獨茂、喟然嘆曰、夫蘭當爲王者香、今乃獨茂、與衆草爲伍、譬猶賢者不逢時、與鄙夫爲倫也、乃止車、援琴鼓之。The handbooks generally ascribe the tune to Confucius himself; the *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (see above) remarks: 'Wise men of olden times, taking this occurrence as an example, composed this elegy' 古之哲人擬之而作是操。The tune as preserved in early Ming handbooks does not show the characteristics of old melodies; cf. the transcription of part 1 and 2 by Courant, op. cit. page 170.

Another tune of a semi-historical character that is found in nearly all handbooks is *Hu-chia* 胡笳 'Barbarian Reedpipe.' This tune has 18 parts, and therefore is also often called *Hu-chia-shih-pa-p'o* 胡笳十八拍 'Eighteen blasts of the barbarian reed pipe.' This tune was composed by the T'ang musician Tung T'ing-lan (董庭蘭, who flourished during the K'ai-yüan period, 731-741). The subject is the exile of Ts'ai Yen, daughter of the famous scholar and musician Ts'ai Yung (133-192; see above), round whom several Lute stories centre. The *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (see above) adds to this tune the following introduction: 'When the Han dynasty was in great confusion, Ts'ai Yen was abducted by Hu horsemen into the barbarian country, and there made the wife of their king. She stayed there twelve years, and bore the king two sons. The king held her in high esteem. Once in spring she ascended a barbarian chariot, and was moved by the sound of the reed pipes; she made a poem to express her feelings. . . . Later the Emperor Wu, because of his friendship with her father Ts'ai Yung, despatched a general who redeemed her. She returned to China, but her two sons remained among the barbarians. Later, when the barbarians longingly remembered her, they rolled a reed into a pipe, and blew on it melancholy tunes. Thereafter Tung T'ing-lan of the T'ang dynasty, who excelled in the laws of music as expounded by Shên Yo and Chu Hsing-hsien<sup>3)</sup>, transcribed this music of the barbarian reed pipe for the Lute,

3) *Shên-chia-shêng, chu-chia-shêng*: the meaning of these two terms is doubtful. Some sources give 汎 for 沈, and 祝 instead of 祝. It would seem that they refer to two schools (*chia* 家) of musical theory, each called after the name of its chief exponent. I wrote Shên Yo and Chu Hsiang-hsien, because the first (沈約, 441-513) was a famous musical theorist, and the second (祝象賢, Liang dynasty) a well-known Lute expert of about the same period. This, however, is a mere guess, that does not pretend to settle the question. Modern Chinese scholars have given up the problem as hopeless; cf. Yang Tsung-chi in his *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu* (cf. Appendix II, no. 7), *Ch'in-hua* 琴話 ch. 2 page 11, and also the relevant items in the *Yin-yüeh-ts'ü-tien* 音樂辭典 by Liu Ch'eng-fu 劉誠甫, Shanghai 1935.



and so made two tunes, called the Smaller and Greater Barbarian Reed-pipe' 漢室大亂、琰爲胡騎所獲、入番爲王后、十二年生二子、王甚重之、春月登胡車琰感箏之音、作詩言志、後武帝與豈有舊、勅大將軍臚文姬歸漢、二子留胡中、後胡人思慕文姬、乃捲蘆葉爲吹箏奏哀怨之音、後唐董庭蘭善爲沈家箏祝家箏、以琴寫胡箏聲爲大小胡箏是也。 Evidently this story was made up to explain a posteriori the presence in the ch'in repertoire of an obviously un-Chinese melody. The 16th part of this tune has been transcribed in western notation by Courant, op. cit. page 171. This tune is very popular in China, and is to be found also in the repertoire of the flute, êrh-hu, p'i-p'a and other instruments.

As a third example I may quote the highly attractive composition *Mei-hua-san-nung* 梅花三弄 'Three variations on the Peach Blossom.' This melody was originally intended for the flute, and the famous flautist of the Chin 晉 period, the scholar Huan I 桓伊 is mentioned as its composer. Tradition asserts that he played this tune for Wang Hui-chih (王徽之, son of the great calligrapher Wang Hsi-chih, 321-379), when they happened to meet on the road. In the *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (see above) this tune has ten parts, which bear the following subtitles: 1. Evening moon over the mountains 溪山夜月, 2. First variation: Calling the moon. The tones penetrate into the wide mist 一弄叫月聲入太霞, 3. Second variation: Entering the clouds. The tones penetrate into the clouds 二弄穿雲聲入雲中, 4. The Blue Bird calls the soul 青鳥啼魂, 5. Third variation: Trying to pass the Hêng river. The tones imitate a long drawn sigh 三弄橫江隔江長歎聲, 6. Tones of a jade flute 玉簫聲, 7. Plaques of jade hit by a cool breeze 凌風憂玉, 8. Tones of an iron flute 鐵笛聲, 9. Peach blossoms dancing in the wind 風蕩梅花, 10. Infinite longing 欲罷不能. The main melodic pattern of this tune is contained in parts 2., 3., and 5, which are transpositions of a extremely delicate and refined melody.

These three examples might be easily increased by scores of others. I mention only the *I-chiao-chin-li* 圯橋進履, regarding Chang Liang the famous general of the end of the Ch'in period, the *Yen-kuo-hêng-yang* 雁過衡陽, said to have been made by the poet Su Wu (蘇武, died 60 B. C.) during his captivity among the barbarians, and the *Ch'ü-yüan-wên-tu* 屈原問渡, ascribed to Ch'ü Yüan, the well-known poet of the 4th century B. C., etc.

3. *Musical versions of literary products.* Foremost among this group come musical versions of some odes of the *Shih-ching* 詩經. *Kuan-chü* 關雎, the opening ode of this classic, which celebrates the virtues of the bride of King Wên of Chou, is, of course, famous.

Then the *Lu-ming* 鹿鳴, a festive ode, where a banquet for high guests is described. It would seem that these two odes are inserted in the ch'in repertoire because both mention the Lute (cf. above, chapter I, page 6-7). These tunes are transmitted in greatly varying versions. Still they show some archaic features, and therefore deserve a special study; they may contain some old musical motifs.

The other tunes belonging to this category can be described in a few words: most of the better known literary products which mention the Lute and its music, or generally correspond to the tenets of ch'in ideology, have been made subjects for Lute melodies. Most handbooks contain musical versions of the *Li-sao* 離騷, of *Kuei-ch'ü-lai-tz'ü* 歸去來辭, *T'êng-wang-ko* 滕王閣, *Nan-hsün-ko* 南薰歌 etc. Many examples of poems and essays set to Lute music may be found in the handbook *Sung-fêng-ko-ch'in-pu* 松風閣琴譜, compiled by Ch'êng Hsiung (程雄; his preface is dated 1677). The reverse process is followed when new words are made to existing melodies; this is called *t'ien-tz'ü* 填詞. Examples of tunes with *t'ien-tz'ü* may be found in the handbook *Shu-huai-tsao* 抒懷操, the sister volume to the *Sung-fêng-ko-ch'in-pu*.

4. *Tunes descriptive of nature.* Tunes of this type, together with those describing a mystic journey, occupy three quarters of the entire ch'in repertoire. After the remarks made above (chapter III, section 3), this connection of the Lute with scenic beauty needs no further commentary.

Ts'ai Yung (see above) is mentioned as the composer of *Ch'ang-ch'ing* 長清, a solemn melody that describes winter, and the coming of spring. The *Shên-chi-pi-pu* remarks: 'This tune takes its inspiration from the snow, it describes its purity and freedom from all earthly stains, it expresses contempt for the world and elevation to empty clearness' 取興於雪、言其清潔而無塵滓之志、厭世途超空明之趣也。The nine parts of this tune are entitled: 1. Heaven and earth breathe purity 乾坤清氣, 2. A clear snow morning 雪天清曉, 3. Snow and sleet fall together 雪霰交飛, 4. Mountains and water merge in each other 山河一色, 5. The brilliant sun in the sky 日麗中天, 6. The wind blows through the luxuriant forest 風鼓瓊林, 7. River and mountain are like a picture 江山如畫, 8. The snow melts on cliffs and in vales 雪消崖谷, 9. Spring returns to the world 萬壑同春.

Further Kuo Mien (郭沔, Sung dynasty) composed a tune on the rivers Hsiao and Hsiang (see above), entitled *Hsiao-hsiang-shui-yün* 瀟湘水雲 'Clouds over the rivers Hsiao and Hsiang.' The ten parts bear the following subtitles: 1. Mist and rain over lake Tung-t'ing 洞庭煙雨,

2. The rivers Chiang and Han are quiet and clear 江漢舒晴, 3. Shadows of the clouds cast down by the brilliant sky 天光雲影, 4. The water is one with the sky 水接天隅, 5. Rolling waves, flying clouds 浪捲雲飛, 6. The rising wind stirs the waves 風起水湧, 7. Sky and water are of the same azure colour 水天一碧, 8. The cold river in the cool moonshine 寒江月冷, 9. Limpid waves stretching for ten thousand miles 萬里澄波, 10. The scenery contains all aspects of nature 景涵萬象.

And here of course must also be classified that most famous of all Lute melodies, the tune called *Kao-shan-liu-shui* 高山流水 'High mountains and flowing streams.' This composition is ascribed to Po Ya (伯牙, also called Po-tzû-ya 伯子牙), the paragon of all Chinese Lute players. He is said to have been a man from Ch'u 楚, who lived during the Ch'un-ch'iu period. The story about him and his friend Chung Ch'i (鍾期, also called Chung-tzû-ch'i 鍾子期) is related in Lieh-tzû, chapter T'ang-wên: 'Po Ya was a great Lute player, and Chung Ch'i a great listener. Po Ya while playing the Lute thought of ascending high mountains. Then Chung Ch'i said: How excellent! Impressing like the T'ai-shan! And when Po Ya thought of flowing streams, Chung Ch'i said: How excellent! Broad and flowing like rivers and streams! What Po Ya thought Chung Ch'i never failed to understand. Once Po Ya roamed on the northern flank of the T'ai-shan. Caught in a torrential rain, he took shelter under a cliff. Sad in his heart he drew his Lute towards him, and pulled the strings. First he played the elegy of the falling rain, then he improvised upon the sounds of crumbling mountains. But as soon as he had played a tune, Chung Ch'i had already grasped its meaning. Then Po Ya pushed aside his Lute, and said with a sigh: Excellent, how excellent! Your hearing is such that you know immediately how to express what is in my mind. How could I ever escape you with my tones! 伯牙善鼓琴, 鍾子期善聽, 伯牙鼓琴, 志在登高山, 鍾子期曰, 善哉, 峩峩兮若泰山, 志在流水, 鍾子期曰善哉, 洋洋兮若江河, 伯牙所念, 鍾子期必得之, 伯牙游於泰山之陰, 卒逢暴雨, 止於岩下, 心悲, 乃援琴而鼓之, 初爲霖雨之操, 更造崩山之音, 曲每奏, 鍾子期輒窮其趣, 伯牙乃舍琴而嘆曰善哉善哉, 子之聽, 夫志想象猶吾心也, 吾於何逃聲哉. The Lü-shih-ch'un-ch'iu supplements this story as follows: 'When Chung Ch'i died, Po Ya broke his Lute and tore the strings, and all his life did not play any more, as he deemed the world not worthy to be played to' 鍾子期死, 伯牙破琴絕絃, 終身不復鼓琴, 以爲世無足復爲鼓琴者. 呂氏春秋卷十四, 本味.

There is hardly any Chinese book or treatise on music that in some form or other does not quote this story: cf., for instance, the quotation in chapter III above, section 4, the last passage of Ying Shao's essay. In later times the story was elaborated further, and

made into a novel (俞伯牙摔琴謝知音, no. 19 of the collection *Chin-kuchih-kuan* 今古奇觀).

This story may be said to contain the essence of the system of ch'in ideology, stressing as it does the supreme importance of the *significance* of Lute music: to express it while playing, and to understand it while listening. Although about Po Ya and Chung Ch'i nothing is reliably known, there can be no doubt that the motif itself is a very old one: perhaps it is an echo of the sacredness of music in ancient China.

The date of the composition which is transmitted under the name *Kao-shan-liu-shui*, however, must be placed comparatively late. It is not mentioned in the *Ch'in-tsao*, and appears only as late as the T'ang period. The author of *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (see above) divides the composition into two separate tunes, which he calls *Kao-shan* and *Liu-shui*. But in his preface to the former he says that originally they formed but one tune; during the T'ang period this tune was split up in two parts, each without further subdivision (*tuan* 段). During the Sung dynasty the part *Kao-shan* was divided into 4 *tuan*, and the part *Liu-shui* in 8 高山流水二曲本只一曲、至唐分爲兩曲、不分段數、至宋分高山爲四段、流水爲八段。The Ch'ing handbook *Ch'un-ts'ao-t'ang-ch'in-pu* (cf. appendix II, no. 16), however, gives it as one tune, and asserts that it was during the Yüan dynasty that the tune was wrongly divided into two parts. Be this as it may, the tunes transmitted in the handbooks under this name do not seem to represent real old music. Very late is a special version of the part *Liu-shui*, a kind of 'show piece,' composed by Chang K'ung-shan 張孔山. It was published in the *T'ien-wên-koch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng* (cf. Appendix II no. 17), and reprinted and analysed by Yang Tsung-chi in his *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu* (see above), *Ch'in-pu* 琴譜 ch. 3. This tune is technically so complicated, that the composer had to invent a dozen new signs to be able to record this music in notation. Although interesting as a proof of the many possibilities of Lute music, it has no value for the study of Chinese music. But the ideological motif which it bears in its name goes doubtless back to many centuries B.C.

5. *Tunes descriptive of literary life.* Most of the tunes belonging to this type are of later date, as a rule from after the Sung dynasty. They sing the joys of the leisure hours of the scholar, passed with refined pleasures. As an example the following tune, ascribed to the literatus Liu Chi (劉基, 1311-1375), may suffice. It is entitled *K'o-ch'uang-yeh-hua* 客窓夜話 'Literary gathering in the evening.' The hand-



book of Yang Piao-chêng (see above) gives the names of its ten parts as follows: 1. Bridling emotions, indulge in meditation 羈情旅思, 2. Celebrating antiquity, deploring the present 慨古傷今, 3. Composing poetry and drinking wine 題詩酌酒, 4. Discussing current topics 時世問答, 5. Idem, 6. A song with clapping of the hands 抵掌一嘯, 6. 7. Elevated talk in the quiet night 清談良夜, 8. Thousand miles, one square 千里一方, 9. Half of this evening equals ten years 半夜十年, 10. Kindred spirits, kindred traditions 同志同傳.

About ninety five per cent of the tunes that are contained in the Lute repertoire may be classified under one of the above five groups. The remaining five per cent are purely musical compositions, and some Buddhist chants.

It goes without saying that the above classification is in many respects very arbitrary: the tunes have been selected from various Ming handbooks, and give but a very general idea of their contents. Still the above will suffice to show that nearly all the tunes of the Ming repertoire have some special meaning or portent: they are what nowadays would be called 'programme music.' The music is not used independently, but chiefly as a means for expressing an idea, for conveying an impression. Music is made subservient to motif.

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## CHAPTER THE FIFTH

### SYMBOLISM

#### 1. SYMBOLISM OF TERMS AND NAMES

Symbolism of the technical names for various parts of the Lute  
—Preponderance of the elements Dragon and Phoenix—Symbolism  
of special names given to Lutes.

The construction of the Lute in general I have already discussed in chapter I (p. 4), at the same time quoting the technical names of some of its component parts. This technical terminology is very old: references in literature tend to show that it was already more or less fixed during the Han dynasty. As these terms illustrate some aspects of ch'in ideology, I shall here discuss them in greater detail.

Illustration VIII shows the upper side (on the right) and the bottom (on the left) of a Lute, with the technical names of each part added. Observing first the upper side, we see that the narrow, low bridge where the strings pass over the sounding box is called *lung-yin* 龍銀 'dragon's gums'; this part of the Lute suggests the roof of a dragon's mouth. The higher bridge on the other end, where the strings are fastened to

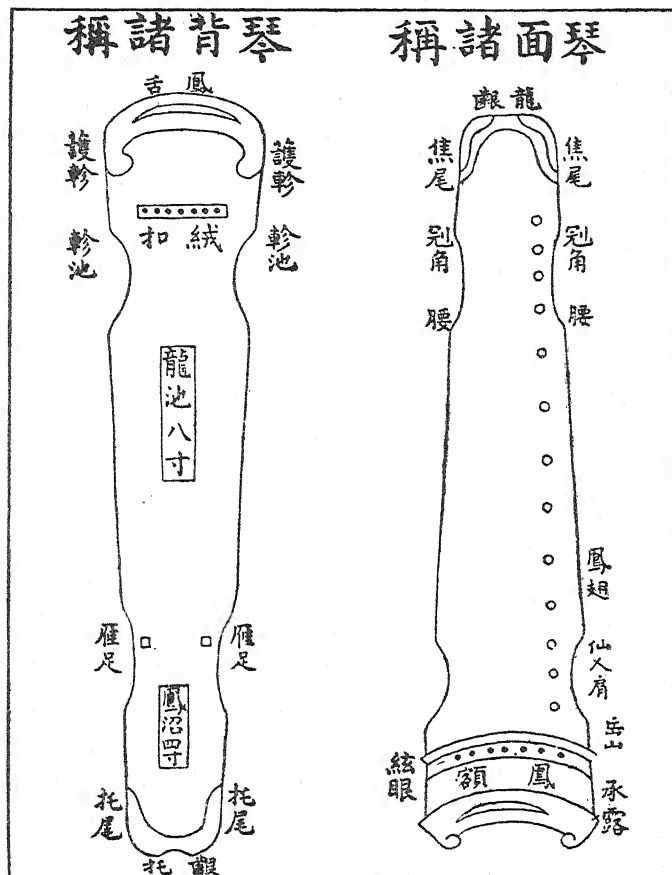


Figure VIII

the silk loops, is called *yo-shan* 岳山. Yo is another name of the famous mountain, the T'ai-shan in Shantung province, a symbol of immovability and aloofness.

The narrow space seen beneath this bridge is called *feng-é* 鳳額 'phoenix forehead'; like *lung-yin* mentioned above, this term is apparently chosen because the slightly bent surface suggests also the forehead of the phoenix. The two terms for the small and the larger indentation, *hsien-jên-chien* 仙人肩 'shoulders of the Immortal' and *yao* 腰 'waist,' are self-explanatory.

The left extremity of the Lute is called *chiao-wei* 焦尾 'scorched tail.' This term refers to an anecdote told about the famous scholar and Lute amateur Ts'ai Yung (蔡邕, 133-192). Ch'in handbooks usually

give this story as follows: 'People from Wu were burning a log of t'ung wood for their cooking. Ts'ai Yung, when he heard its crackling sounds, said: This will be the right material for making a Lute! He asked whether he might have the log, and made a Lute from it. At one end, however, the marks of the burning still showed; therefore he called this Lute Scorched Tail' 吳人有燒桐以爨者、蔡邕聞其爆聲曰、此良材也、因請之、削以爲琴、而燒不盡、因名之焦尾。 In lists of Lute names there occurs the appellation *I-hsin* 遺薪 'Left-over fuel': this name refers to the same anecdote.

The bulging part above the 'waist' is called *kuan-chüeh* 冠角 'ceremonial cap,' since it shows the same outline as this type of headgear. Both sides are called *fêng-ch'ih* 鳳翅 'Phoenix wings,' because they resemble the straight wing feathers with which this mythical bird is usually represented.

Turning now to the bottom board, we see in the first place the two sound holes, to which I have already referred above in chapter I (p. 4). Usually the largest one is called *lung-ch'ih* 龍池 'dragon pond,' and the smaller *fêng-chao* 鳳沼 'phoenix pool.' But from the *Ch'in-tiao* (cf. Appendix II, no. 1) it would appear that during the Han period the upper hole was called simply *ch'ih* 'pond,' and the lower one *pin* 濱 'shore.' A Korean source of the Ming dynasty (*Yüeh-hsüeh-kuei-fan* 樂學軌範, preface dated 1610) calls the upper hole *lung-ch'üan* 龍泉, 'dragon fountain,' and the other *fêng-ch'ih* 鳳池 'phoenix pond.'

The two pegs for fastening the strings are called *yen-tsu* 雁足 'goose feet,' doubtless because of their suggestive shape. The lower part of the *fêng-é* is called *fêng-shê* 鳳舌 'phoenix tongue.' The remaining terms have no special connection with the lore of the Lute.

The terms mentioned above show the preponderance of the two elements Phoenix and Dragon. The lore connected with these two mythical animals pervades the ideology of the Lute: as will be seen below, many special names of Lutes refer to the Phoenix or the Dragon, and not a few tunes celebrate their eminent qualities.

It is not only in Lute music that these two fabulous animals occupy a foremost position: they are closely associated with Chinese music in general. They figure prominently in the decoration of the instruments of the ceremonial orchestra, and some instruments even derive their names from them (e.g. *Lung-ti* 龍笛, *fêng-huang-hsiao* 鳳凰簫, both names of flutes).

Chinese sources explain the close connection of phoenix and music by the fact that according to tradition it was the notes sung by the



male and female phoenix that in hoary antiquity inspired man to construct the twelve lü 律, the sonorous tubes that form the basis of Chinese musical theory (cf. *Han-shu* 漢書, *Lü-li-chih* 律曆志). And with regard to the dragon they say that the lofty and awe-inspiring qualities of this mythical animal, and its rolling growlings when it roams through the clouds, suggest the solemn tones of ceremonial music. But the secondary character of these explanations is evident: they represent endeavours to explain a posteriori an association, the real origin of which was no longer understood. The real origin must probably be sought in ancient Chinese beliefs, where the original forms of dragon and phoenix, i.e. *spirit of the waters* and *fire-bird*, played an important rôle, both being considered as granters of vitality and fertility. As such these animals figured prominently in the sacrifices and the ceremonial music connected therewith. This question, however, deserves a special investigation.

Next there are the special names born by Lutes. When a connoisseur obtains a Lute the tones of which appeal to him, or which because of its colour, its shape or for some other reason captures his fancy, he will choose a special name for it. This name is carved in graceful characters in the bottom board (usually in the space above the Dragon Pond; cf. ill. II, in chapter I of this book), and henceforward the instrument is always referred to by this special name, which gives it something of a personal character, and individual appeal.

Later connoisseurs may add laudatory inscriptions or other remarks, and so antique Lutes are not unfrequently covered with various inscriptions and seals, which make it a favourite object for the connoisseur's appreciation. For the carving of these inscriptions there exists a special technique, which I have discussed in Appendix III. For our present subject, however, it is only the names themselves that are of importance.

The happy owner of a beautiful instrument is free to choose any name for it that appeals to him. But usually it is selected from the existing lists of approved Lute names. Such lists are to be found among the introductory chapters of most of the handbooks for the Lute. A few were published separately. The best known is the *Ya-ch'in-ming-lu* 雅琴名錄, compiled by Hsieh Chuang (謝莊, style: Hsi-i 希逸, 421-466); this text is to be found in the *Hsün-chih* 順治 edition of the huge *ts'ung-shu Shuo-fu* 說郛. Just as in the titles of the tunes, also

4) *The Lute as an Antique*, p. 180 below.

in these names of individual instruments various aspects of ch'in ideology are to be found reflected.

The greater part of the names describe the beautiful tones of the instrument. I mention, for instance, names like *Ling-lung-yü* 玲瓏玉 'Tinkling Jade,' *Hao-chung* 號鐘, 'Singing Bell,' *Yen-ying* 雁應 'Echo of a Goose cry,' *Ch'un-lei* 春雷 'Spring Thunder,' *Ming-yü* 鳴玉 'Singing Jade,' *Lung-yin* 龍吟 'Dragon's Growling,' *Lin-lang* 琳琅 etc.

Others refer to the fact that the Lute is the repository of the correct music of the Ancient Sages: to this category belong such titles as *Ts'un-ku* 存古 'Preserving Antiquity,' *Yu-shêng* 友聖 'Befriending the Ancient Sages,' *Huai-ku* 懷古 'Cherishing Antiquity,' *T'ai-ku-i-yin* 太古遺音 'Tones bequeathed by high antiquity,' *Ta-ya* 大雅 'Great Elegance'

Others again suggest the atmosphere that surrounds the Lute and its music. Here I would classify for instance: *Ku-t'ung* 孤桐 'Lone-ly dryandra tree,' *Han-yü* 寒玉 'Cool Jade,' *Sung-hsüeh* 松雪 'Snow on the pines,' *Yang-shêng-chu* 養生主 'Master of nurturing life,' *Hsüeh-yeh-chung* 雪夜鐘 'Bells on a snowy night,' *Ho-yu* 鶴友 'Friend of the Crane,' *Ching-yu* 靜友 'Friend of Serenity,' *Fou-ch'ing* 浮磬 'Floating Sonorous stone,' *Sung-hsien* 松仙 'Immortal of the Pine forest,' etc. Some names of four characters evoke a picturesque scenery, suggesting refined aesthetic enjoyment, so dear to the artist and the connoisseur: *Shih-shang-ch'ing-ch'üan* 石上清泉 'A clear stream flowing over stones,' *Hsüeh-yeh-chung-shêng* 雪夜鐘聲 'The sound of a temple bell on a snowy evening,' *Pi-t'ien-fêng-ming* 碧天鳳鳴 'A phoenix singing in the azure sky,' *Ch'ing-hsiao-ho-lei* 青霄鶴淚 'A crane crying in the high air.'

The above are only a few examples: the lover of the Lute may choose any name that pleases him from the vast field of Chinese literary allusion.



## 2. SYMBOLISM OF TONES

Great importance of timbre in Lute music—Chinese attempts to define the various sorts of timbre—Lêng Ch'ien's Sixteen Definitions, in text and translation.

Most handbooks for the Lute player include among the introductory chapters a special section entitled *Ch'in-shêng* 琴聲, lit. 'Tones of the Lute.' There an attempt is made to express in words that extremely elusive element that constitutes one of the chief charms of Lute music: the timbre, the colour of the tones.

Through the delicate structure of the Lute, the strings respond to

the most subtle nuances in the touch. The same note obtains a different colour when it is played with the thumb or with the forefinger of the right hand, and the timbre changes according to the force with which the string is pulled. This applies especially to the technique of the left hand: beneath the nimble and sensitive fingers of the expert player the strings show a wealth of unsuspected modulations. The high notes may either have a dry, almost wooden sound, or they may be sharp and metallic, and in another passage the same note may be clear and tinkling, like a silver bell. Low notes may be broad and mellow, or so abrupt as to be nearly rattling.

As the correct application of the various sorts of modulation is the basis of Lute music, the Chinese have given much care to describe and define the various touches and the results they produce. In choosing the terminology they borrowed freely from the rich vocabulary of aesthetic appreciation, used by Chinese artists and connoisseurs<sup>5)</sup>. Next to special musical terms like *ch'ing* 輕 'light,' or *sung* 鬆 'loose,' we also find old appreciative adjectives, which are not easy to translate. We find for instance words like *yu* 幽, *ch'ing* 清, and *hsü* 虛, each of which suggests a definite atmosphere or mood. In most cases it is impossible to cover all the associations evoked by such a term with one single English word: their meaning must be understood through the context.

Not a few Chinese musicians have made endeavours to formulate such definitions for the various sorts of modulation. Well known, for instance, is a set of 24 articles, entitled *Ch'in-huang* 琴況, drawn up by the Lute expert Hsü Hung 徐洪, and to be found in the *Ta-huan-ko-ch'in-pu* (大還閣琴譜, first preface dated 1673), a handbook for the Lute connected with his name (the second article has been translated by Laloy, on page 71 of his *La Musique Chinoise*: cf. Appendix I, no. 5). Universally approved, however, is the set of definitions formulated by Lêng-hsien 冷仙, the 'Immortal Lêng,' under the title of *Ch'in-shêng-shih-liu-fa* 琴聲十六法 'Sixteen Rules for the Tones of the Lute.'

The 'Immortal Lêng' was a great musician of the beginning of

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5) Both Chinese and western dictionaries are sadly inadequate in their explanations of the hundreds of special terms that constitute this vocabulary. Yet an understanding of the scope of these terms, and of the subtle nuances in sentiment they imply, is absolutely necessary for a correct interpretation of the writings by Chinese art critics, whether their subject is fine art, belles lettres, scenic beauty or music. It is to be hoped that some day a sinologue with artistic interest will undertake to compile a special dictionary of Chinese aesthetic terms, illustrated with appropriate quotations. A beginning on a small scale has been made by Lin Yü-t'ang in his *The Importance of Living* (New York 1937), Appendix B: A Chinese critical vocabulary.



the Ming dynasty; his real name was Lêng Ch'ien (冷謙, style: Ch'i-ching 啓敬, lit. name Lung-yang-tzû 龍陽子, died between 1403-1424). About 1370-1380 he occupied the position of Chief Musician in the Yüeh-pu 樂部, the Board of Music. Next to music Lêng Ch'ien was deeply interested in Taoist magic; the Imperial Catalogue (ch. 147. p. 10 verso) mentions a book by him entitled *Hsiu-ling-yao-chih* 修齡要指 'Important directions for prolonging life.' Apparently he lived to be a proof of the truth of his beliefs, for according to tradition he was over a hundred years old when he died (cf. *I-nien-lu* 疑年錄, ch. 5).

His *Ch'in-shêng-shih-liu-fa*, which I translate below, is reprinted in many of the later ch'in-pu, usually without quoting Lêng Ch'ien as the author. Therefore this essay is sometimes ascribed to other musicians. Next to the ch'in-pu, it is also to be found in the *Chiao-ch'uang-chiu-lu* 蕉窗九錄 by Hsiang Yüan-pien (項元汴, 1525-1590), and in the *T'an-chi-ts'ung-shu* (檀几叢書, see above). For my translation I have used the text as published in the *Chiao-ch'uang-chiu-lu*.

This text presents various difficulties. The sentences are brief, and often ambiguous. It is often not clear whether appreciative adjectives apply to the finger technique or to the tones produced by it. In my translation I have taken all these adjectives to refer to the finger technique, in order not to confuse the reader.

The appreciative adjectives are not easy to render adequately: they suggest rather than describe, they indicate but do not define. Many a sentence might in the translation have been spun out to a whole passage. I have aimed at brevity, leaving it to the reader to interpret the passages, and to elaborate their meaning. I do not pretend, however, that my translation is final: in many cases my translation is but one of a dozen different possibilities.

Often our text uses special terms referring to various parts of the finger technique; as those are discussed in the next section of this chapter, I have left them here without any special explanation.

## SIXTEEN RULES FOR THE TONES OF THE LUTE

### 1. Ch'ing 輕: The Light Touch.

Not light and not heavy are the tones of balanced harmony. When the melody starts<sup>6)</sup>, one should aim at playing in these balanced tones.

6) 起調, in the handbooks often abbreviated to 已周, literally: beginning of the melody. A tune usually opens with an introductory movement, which has no melodic connections with the following parts. Then, mostly in the middle of the second movement, the chief melodic pattern of the tune appears for the first time. This passage is marked with the sign 已周.

If, in applying the light and heavy touch, the rules of decrescendo and crescendo are adhered to, the sentiment of the tune appears of its own accord. The light touch is the most difficult of all. If not enough force is applied, then the tone is vague and not true, dim and not clear; though light, it is not elegant. The middle light tones are faultless, clear and true. (When applying the light touch) one should consider the string being as thin as one single silk thread of one tenthousandth of an inch, the sound of which is spoilt when the finger as much as approaches it. Then these tones shall express a sentiment of infinite profundity. Sometimes one whole phrase or bar is played in the light touch, but there exist also the mixed, the higher and the lower light touches. Their tendencies vary, but, with regard to all, the main point lies in clearness and truth.

一曰輕。不輕不重者、中和之音也、起調當以中和爲主、而輕重特(read 持)損益之則、其趣自生、蓋音之輕處最難、力有未到則浮而不實、晦而不明、雖輕亦不嘉、惟輕之中、不爽清實、而一絲一忽、指到音綻、幽趣無限、迺有一節一句之輕、有間雜高下之輕、種種意趣、皆貴於清實中得之。

## 2. *Sung* 鬆: The Loose Touch.

The beauty of vibrato and vibrato ritardando lies in the loose touch. The left hand should move up and down over the string in a rounded-off movement, light and freely, without any jerks or hitches. It should not be too hasty, nor too slow, but just right: this is what is called the loose touch. Heavy, thin, slow and quick vibrato and vibrato ritardando, all are based on the loose touch. Therefore, the wondrous music of the Lute entirely depends upon touch. If the touch is rounded off, then the emotions are unified; if the loose touch is lively, then the thoughts are elated. The light touch should evoke an impression as of water rising in waves, its substance should evoke an impression as of pearls rolling in a bowl; its sound should be like the resonance of intoning a text: this is what is called the loose touch.

二曰鬆。鬆即吟猱妙處、宛轉動蕩無滯無礙、不促不慢、以至恰好、謂之鬆、吟猱之巨細緩急、俱有鬆、故琴之妙在取音、宛轉則情聯、鬆活則意暢、其趣如水之興瀾、其體如珠之走盤、其聲如哦咏之有韻、方可名鬆。

## 3. *Ts'ui* 脆: The Crisp Touch.

The crisp touch is firm. Even for playing tunes of soft harmony and great elegance, both hands should attack the strings firmly, so that the tones will not be turbid. For each hand this crisp touch is used, but it is hidden and does not come into sight, and it is not easy to express. When the right hand drags on the strings, then the tones will be turbid and dull. Therefore it is said: One should attack the

strings with the tips of the fingers, touching them vertically from above. If one does not attack the strings smartly, then the tones will be sticky and irregular. Therefore it is said: The resonance should be like metal or stone, the movement of the fingers should be like the rising wind. For understanding the crisp touch, the swiftness of the fingers should first be known. The swiftness of the fingers is rooted in firmness. The firmness of the fingers is rooted in the arm. If the strength of the arm is applied, then the firm, crisp touch may be executed. Not until then can it be understood that the tendency to turbidity inherent in the strings does not annoy the true musician.<sup>7)</sup>

三曰脆。脆者健也、於冲和大雅中、健其兩手、而音不至於滯、兩手皆有脆音、第藏之不見、出之不易、右指靠絃、則音滯而木、故曰、指必甲尖、絃必懸落、在指不勁、則音膠而格、故曰、響如金石、動如風發、要知脆處、即指之靈處、指之靈、自出於健、而指之健、又出於腕、腕中之力既到、則爲堅脆、然後識滯氣之在絃、不爲知音厭聽。

#### 4. *Hua* 滑: The Gliding Touch.

Gliding means flowing: it is the opposite of halting. The tones tend to be halting, and the fingers tend to be gliding. By nature the tones tend to be drawn out, and to follow each other in slow succession, like the bubbling sound of a stream, that goes on gurgling endlessly. Therefore this is called halting. If the finger technique is impeded, then it is not swift. The fingers should move up and down like gusts of wind, therefore this touch is called gliding. The most important point in the movement of the fingers is of course gliding. But sometimes also stopping is important. This stopping should be considered as a pause in the gliding. So that when in a tune there is halting, there must also be gliding; and if there is gliding, there must also be halting. Then both obtain their real significance.

四曰滑。滑者溜也、又澁之反也、音嘗欲澁而指嘗欲滑、音本喜慢、而緩緩出之、若流泉之鳴咽、時滴滴不已、故曰澁、指取走絃而滯則不靈、乃往來之鼓動、如風發發、曰故滑、然指之運用、固貴其滑、而亦有時平貴留、所謂留者、即滑中之安頓處也、故有澁不可無滑、有滑不可無留、意各有在耳。

#### 5. *Kao* 高: The Lofty Touch.

Although the lofty touch resembles the antique touch (see below sub no. 11), they are essentially different. The antique touch is expressed by resonance, the lofty touch is modelled after melody. If the finger technique is serene and clear, and if moreover one can apply the lofty modulation, only then shall the meaning of the tones reach the mysterious wonder. Therefore this touch is of the utmost tranquillity, like a deep well that can not be fathomed, like a high mountain whose top is lost to the eye. It flows on, like streams that are never ex-

7) The text reads: 在絃, 當爲知音厭聲耳, which does not seem to make sense. I follow the text as reprinted in the *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu* (cf. Appendix II, no. 14).

hausted, and it is soundless like the threefold sound<sup>8)</sup> of emptiness.

五曰高。高與古似、而古實與高異、古以韻發、高以調裁、指下既靜既清、而又能得高調、則音意始臻微妙、故其爲甯謐也、若深淵之不可測、若喬嶽之不可望、其爲流逝也、若江河之欲無盡、若三籟之欲無聲。

#### 6. *Chieh* 潔: The Pure Touch.

If one wishes to attain perfection in tone, one should first attain perfection in the finger technique. The way of perfecting the finger technique passes from being to not-being, through multiplicity to simplicity. Not discoloured by one speck of dust, not defiled by one flaw, the secret of the finger technique dwells in the stage of the highest purity. But generally people do not realize this. If in the finger technique purity is perfected, then the tones become more and more rarified.<sup>9)</sup> The more rarified the tones are, the more the spirit nears eternity. Therefore I say: If one wishes to perfect wondrous tones, one should first perfect the wondrous finger technique. In order to perfect the wondrous finger technique, one must necessarily start with cultivating purity in oneself.

六曰潔。欲修妙音者、必先修妙指、修指之道、從有而無、因多而寡、一塵不染、一垢弗緇、止於至潔之地、而人不知其解、指既修潔、則音愈希、則意趣愈永、吾故曰、欲修妙音者、必先修妙指、欲修妙指者、又必先自修潔始。

#### 7. *Ch'ing* 清: The Clear Touch.

All tones are governed by clearness. If the place where the music is performed is secluded, clearness results; when the heart is serene, clearness results; when the spirit is solemn, clearness results; if the Lute is true, clearness results; if the strings are clean, clearness results. Only when all these factors that affect clearness are assembled may one aim at clearness in the finger technique. Then left and right hand shall be like Male and Female Phoenix, chanting harmoniously together, and the tones shall not be stained with the slightest impurity. The movement of the fingers should be like striking bronze bells or sonorous stones. Slow or quick, no secondary sounds shall be produced, so that when hearing these tones one obtains an impression of purity—as of a pool in autumn, of brilliancy—as of the shining moon, of dim resonance—as of the babbling water in mountain gorges, of profundity—as of a resounding valley. These tones shall in truth freeze alike heart and

8) In *Chuang-tzu* 莊子, chapter *Ch'i-wu-lun* 齊物論, there are mentioned the sounds of Heavenly, of Earthly and of Human Emptiness, 天籟, 地籟, 人籟. Lai is the unheard harmony of the Universe, what the Greeks called the 'Harmony of the Spheres.'

9) *Hsi* 希, a typical Taoist adjective, difficult to translate. With the equally obscure terms *i* 夷 and *wei* 微 it is used in the 14th chapter of the *Tao-tê-ching* to describe Tao. There it is said: 'I listen to it but I can not hear it, therefore I call it *hsi*' 聽之不聞, 名曰希.



bones,<sup>10</sup> and it shall be as if one were going to be bodily transformed into an Immortal.

七曰清。清者音之主宰、地僻則清、心靜則清、氣肅則清、琴實則清、絃潔則清、必使群清、咸集而後可求之指上、兩手如鸞鳳和鳴、不染纖毫濁氣、應指如擊金鑿石、緩急絕無容聲、試一聽之則澄然秋潭、皎然月潔、翻然山濤、幽然谷應、真令人心骨俱冷、體氣欲仙。

#### 8. *Hsü* 虛: The Empty Touch.

While playing the Lute to express true tones, this is not very difficult. What is really difficult is to express emptiness. If asked 'The fingers move to produce tones; where does emptiness come in?', I would answer: It lies exactly in the producing of tones. If the tones are sharp, the player shows his precipitation; if the tones are coarse, then the player betrays his impurity; but if the tones are serene, then the player shows that he has achieved the expression of emptiness. This is the right way for appreciating music. The merit of the finger technique lies in two things: on the one hand in expressing the spirit of the melody, and on the other in refining its purity. When the spirit of the melody is expressed, then the heart will become serene as a matter of course, and when the purity is refined, the tones shall naturally be empty. Therefore though being quick they will not be disorderly, and though being many they will not be confused. The self-sufficiency of a deep well, an irradiating splendour, high mountains and flowing streams: with the spirit of these one's soul should harmonize.

八曰虛。撫琴著實處、亦何難、獨難於得虛、然指動而求聲、烏乎虛、余則曰、政在聲中求耳、聲厲則知躁、聲粗則知濁、聲靜則知虛、此審音之道也、蓋下指功夫、一在調氣、一在淘洗、調氣則心自靜、淘洗則聲自虛、故雖急而不亂、多而不繁、深淵自居、清光發外、山高水流、於此可以神會。

#### 9. *Yu* 幽: The Profound Touch.

If tones are profound, then they come up to the standard of Lute music. The quality of music depends upon the personality of the player: thus profundity comes from within. Therefore, when a high-minded and cultivated scholar executes a tune, then the resonance is profound. If one truly understands profundity as expressed by the fingers, the player can let himself go, whether the movement be slow or quick. The music will be broad and generous like the wind, and unstained by earthly dust. It will serve to show the elevated disposition of the player, and the fingers will depict the emotion that inspired each part of the composition. This is meant by the saying: Let the fingers express what the heart experiences<sup>11</sup>. When one hears his music one shall know the personality of the player. Such are the wonderful

10) For this 'frozen' mental condition cf. above, page. 44.

11) Quoted from *Lieh-tsu*, chapter T'ang-wên.

qualities of the profound touch.

九曰幽。音有幽度、始稱琴品、品係乎人、幽由於內、故高雅之士動操便有幽韻、洵知幽之在指、無論緩急、悉能安閒自如、風度盎盎、些無塵染、足覩瀟灑胸次、指下自然寫出一段風情、所謂得之心、而應之手、聽其音而得其人、此幽之微妙也。

#### 10. *Chi* 奇: The Rare Touch.

The special quality of tone that is produced by the rare touch appears in the vibrato and the glissando. If while playing it is applied in the right way, it should evoke an impression as if a thousand mountain peaks vied with each other in verdure, as if the ten thousand streams emulated each other's effervescence. It should impart to the hearer a sensation of flowing, of going on forever, an unbroken continuity. Where in a tune periods or bars are suddenly broken off, and at the end of a tune, care should be taken especially not to let the music end in a vague, careless way. For each part of a tune has its special sentiment that should be expressed by the performer. Moreover a expression should be given as if one were riding on horseback high up in the mountains, amidst drifting clouds.<sup>12)</sup> When every note is made to express the sentiment inherent in it, then only shall one know the wonder of the rare touch.

十曰奇。音有奇特處、乃在吟逗間、指下取之、當如千巖競秀、萬壑爭流、令人流連不盡、應接不暇、至章句頓挫、曲折之際、尤不可輕意草草放過、定有一段情緒、又如山從人面起、雲傍馬頭生、字字摹神、方知奇妙。

#### 11. *Ku* 古: The Antique Touch.

In studying the Lute there are only two ways: either one follows the old methods, or one follows the methods that are in vogue at the time. Although the old music is obscured by its high antiquity, still if one tries to approach its meaning, its harmony and simplicity may be reached as a matter of course. Therefore, when in playing one does not fall in with the tunes that are in vogue at the time, then the music breathes the spirit of the Emperor Fu Hsi. It be grand, broad and simple, boldly moving over the strings, disdaining petty virtuosity. It should be unmoved like a profound mountain, like a cavernous vale, like an old tree or a cool stream, like the rustling wind, causing the hearer suddenly to realize the True Way. This is something that certainly is rarely seen or heard in this world: therefore it is called the antique touch.

12) Quotation from the poem entitled *Sung-yu-jên-ju-shu* 送友人入蜀 (Coll. Works, ch. 15), a poem by the great T'ang poet Li T'ai-po (李太白, 701-762). Lin Yü-t'ang translates these lines: 'Above the man's face arise the hills; beside the horse's head emerge the clouds' (cf. *My Country and my People*, New York 1936, p. 246-247, where the rich imagery of these lines is aptly explained).

十一曰古。琴學祇有二途、非從古則從時、茲雖古學久淹而彷彿其意則自和澹中來、下指不落時調、便有羲皇氣象、寬大純朴、落落絃中、不事小巧、宛然深山邃谷老木寒泉、風聲簌簌、頓令人起道心、絕非世所見聞者、是以名曰古音。

## 12. *T'an* 澹: The Simple Touch.

The Lute masters of the present time aim at charming the ears; they insist upon producing captivating sounds, thereby greatly sinning against refined elegance. This is because they do not know that the basis of Lute music is simplicity. I, on the contrary, tune my Lute to simplicity, therefore the great mass does not understand my music. Where is it that simplicity dwells? I love its sentiment, which is not extravagant nor contending. I love its flavour, which is like snow or ice. I love its echo, which is like the wind blowing over pines, like rain on bamboo, like the bubbling of a mountain stream, or like lapping waves. It is only with great musicians that one can talk about simplicity.

十二曰澹。時師欲娛人耳、必作媚音、殊傷大雅、第不知琴音本澹、而吾復調之以澹、固衆人所不解、惟澹何居、吾愛此情、不參不覷、吾愛此味、如雪如冰、吾愛此響、松之風而竹之雨、澗之滴而波之瀾也、故善知音者、始可與言澹。

## 13. *Chung* 中: The Balanced Touch.

Balanced sounds tones occur in all music, but they are inherent<sup>13)</sup> in the music of the Lute. After the old music was lost, there were many that pulled the strings with ardent fervour, and carefully listened to the Lute; but only the most excellent musicians<sup>14)</sup> are able to transmit the echo of the empty vale. When, ignorantly, one rejoices in elaborating mellow and captivating tones, obliquity<sup>15)</sup> results. When the finger technique is heavy and impure, obliquity results. When the resonance is strained and hasty, obliquity results. When the tones produced are coarse and sharp, obliquity results. When the strings are attacked hurriedly, obliquity results. When the personality of the player is unstable and casual, obliquity results. Rectifying this obliquity, returning to completeness, banishing the devious and aiming at the right, this is the way to obtain the tradition of the balanced touch.

十三曰中。樂有中聲、惟琴固然、自古音淹沒、攘臂絃索而捧耳於琴者比比矣、即有繼空谷之響、未免郢人寡和、不知喜工柔媚則偏、落指重濁則偏、性好炎鬧則偏、發響局促則偏、取音粗厲則偏、入絃倉卒則偏、氣質浮躁則偏、矯其偏、歸於至、祛其倚、習於正、斯得中之傳。

13) Cf. Chuang-tzû: 因其固然 'following its natural course'.

14) *Ying-jên-kua-ho*, lit.: 'The people of Ying play (*ho* in the 4th tone) songs that few are able to perform'; quotation from the *Sung-yü-chi* 宋玉集. Meaning as in the translation above.

15) *P'ien* is used as counterpart to *chung* 中, an allusion to the preface of the Doctrine of the Mean, *Chung-yung* 中庸, where it is said: 'Being without inclination to either side is called *chung*' (Legge), 不偏之謂中。

14. *Ho* 和: The Harmonious Touch.

Harmony is the basis of all tones: it means neither overdoing nor falling short.<sup>16)</sup> It is modulated on the strings, it is experienced in the fingers, it is diversified in the notes. The strings have their own nature: if they are compliant, then they will be in harmony with each other. If they are recalcitrant, then they are false. When the movement of the fingers moving up and down, from one string to the other, is smooth like varnish, then the strings harmonize with the fingers. The tones are regulated by the gamut: sometimes they are to be produced exactly on the spot indicated by one of the thirteen studs, sometimes they are not. The numerical indications fix the notes. The important point is to make the vibrato smooth, and to make the chords harmonize precisely, in order to express the sentiment of the tune. Then fingers and tones will be in harmony. Every tone has its own special significance: the significance comes first, for the notes adjust themselves to the significance. So all the wonders of this music are completed. Therefore, heavy and not vain, light but not floating, swift but not hasty, slow but not slack; with regard to vibrato and vibrato ritardando: smooth but not vulgar; with regard to glissando's: correct and not inaccurate; when all the movements are linked up together smoothly; when the crescendo's and decrescendo's are crisp and yet connected... then tone and significance shall be in harmony. Then the soul shall be free and the spirit at rest, fingers and strings melt together, and the pure harmony that leaves no trace shall be produced. These are the signs by which I recognize the great Harmony.

十四曰和。和爲五音之本、無過不及之謂也、當調之在絃、審之在指、辨之在音、絃有性、順則協、逆則矯、往來鼓動有如膠漆、則絃與指和、音有律、或在微、或不在微、其有分數以位其音、要使婉婉成吟、絲絲叶韻、以得其曲之情、則指與音和、音有意、意動音隨、則衆妙歸、故重而不虛、輕而不浮、疾而不促、緩而不弛、若吟若猱、圓而不俗、以綽以注、正而不差、紆迴曲折、聯而無間、抑揚起伏、斷而復連、則音與意和、因之神間氣逸、指與絃化、自得渾合無迹、吾是以知其太和。

15. *Chi* 疾: The Quick Touch.

In the finger technique both the slow and the quick touch are used. The slow touch is the basis of the quick, the quick touch is the echo of the slow. In the tunes both touches are alternating continually. Sometimes in the middle of a bar the touch is quick, but near its end it slows down; and a bar that ends on the slow touch sometimes is followed up immediately by a movement in the swift touch. Moreover there are two ways for executing the quick touch.

16) Quoted from the *Lun-yü* 論語, Book XI, ch. 15. 3: 'The Master said: To go beyond is as wrong as to fall short' (Legge).



The first is called the little swift touch, which must be brisk. It must be firm, yet the movement of the fingers should not spoil the elegance inherent in the swift touch: it should suggest floating clouds and flowing water. The second is the great swift touch. Its most important point lies in its precipitation; but one should make special efforts not to cause confusion by playing too quickly. Then as a matter of course one expresses a mood of tranquillity, and the sounds will come forth bubbling, like rocks crumbling down or like a cascade falling from a high place. Therefore the quick touch is regulated by the meaning of the tones. It is the meaning that lends tones their divine qualities.

十五曰疾。指法有徐，則有疾，然徐爲疾之綱，疾爲徐之應，嘗相間錯，或句中借速以落遲，或句完遲者以速接，又有二法，小速微快，要以緊，遞指不傷疾中之雅度，而隨有行雲流水之趣，大速貴急，務使急而不亂，依然安閒之氣象，而瀉出崩崖飛瀑之聲，是故疾以意用，更以意神。

#### 16. Hsü 徐: The Slow Touch.

The Ancients used the Lute to nurture their nature and their emotions; therefore they called its tones rarified. This quality is to be expressed by the very slow touch. Tones are produced by the fingers, broadly roaming over the strings, but observing the right measure. The finger technique should be in accordance with the right measure, so that the music produced is in harmony with the gamut. Sometimes one entire bar is played calmly and slowly, sometimes also in the same bar slow and quick alternate with each other. Sometimes a bar breaks off in the middle and then goes on again, sometimes also while going on smoothly it suddenly breaks off. When this technique is executed correctly as each case requires, then naturally one produces the rarified tones of antiquity, and gradually one penetrates the deepest mystery of this music.<sup>17)</sup>

十六曰徐。古人以琴涵養性情，故名其聲曰希，嘗於徐徐得之，音生遲指，優游絃上，節其氣候，候至而下，以叶厥律，或章句舒徐，或緩急相間，或斷而復續，或續而復斷，因候制宜，自然調古聲希，漸入淵微，嚴道微詩，幾同拈出陽春調月滿西樓，下指遲，其於徐意大有得也。

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17) The last lines of this paragraph seem badly transmitted. *Yang-ch'un* is a famous old tune, said to have been composed by Sung Yu (宋玉, third century B. C.). It is not clear, however, whether *Yueh-man-hsi-lou* is also the name of a tune, or a sentence in itself. As such Chinese musicians as I have consulted could not solve the problem without making drastic changes in the text, I leave these lines untranslated.

### 3. SYMBOLISM OF THE FINGER TECHNIQUE

Postures of the hands, and their explanations—Set of special pictures illustrating the finger technique; their various editions—Technical terminology used in the Lute handbooks—The abbreviated signs (*chien-tzû*)—List of elementary *chien-tzû*, their meaning and symbolism—Examples of how the notation is read.

When the spirit of the various touches has been understood, then the Lute player must devote his attention to their correct execution, and try to master the finger technique. Also with regard to this practical aspect of the technique of Lute playing, the handbooks give explicit directions, illustrated by a rich symbolism. When the meaning of the abbreviated signs that constitute the Lute notation has been understood, and when their spirit is recognized, then the student should be able to read and interpret correctly the tunes as they are recorded in the handbooks.

As has been stated above, Lute music is written down not in notes, but in complicated symbols that indicate how a note is produced. These symbols are combinations of abbreviated characters, the so-called *chien-tzû* 減字; these shall presently be discussed in greater detail.

Among the introductory chapters of each Lute handbook a special section, called *chih-fa* 指法, or also *pu-tzû* 譜字, is devoted to these *chien-tzû*. This section covers several pages; for as a rule in the handbooks no fewer than 150-200 special abbreviations are used, and each of these is carefully explained in this section. But the Lute masters justly deem mere words inadequate for expressing all the subtleties of the technique described. When it is stated, for instance, that a certain sign means:

'Pull the third string inwards with the index of the right hand', this explanation is not sufficient for the student who studies the Lute without his master being present. For there are many ways to pull a string inwards with the index, but there is but one that is correct, and that shall produce the desired timbre.

Therefore to the section *chih-fa* a second one is added, entitled *shou-shih* 手勢 'Postures of the hands'. This section consists of a series of about forty drawings, showing in a schematic way the correct posture of right and left hand for each of the more frequently occurring touches. In some of the later handbooks these sketches are drawn so clumsily, that it is difficult to imagine how they could be of any use to the student of the finger technique. But the older handbooks often have more elaborate drawings, sketched with undeniable skill. To each drawing there is usually added a short sentence, which by means of comparison and symbol explains the spirit of each posture treated. Figure IX, for example, shows the correct posture of the right hand for executing a chord. This picture bears the legend: 'The right hand, suggesting a flying dragon grasping the clouds' 右飛龍拏雲勢, and underneath is written: 'The way to produce a chord with thumb and middle finger' 大中指齊撮法. Thus the master tries to suggest to the reader that the touch should be broad and firm, the hand having more or less a clawing posture. Often the meaning is still further elaborated in a short explanatory note, called *hsing* 興, 'mood' of the posture in question. The 'hsing' of figure X reads: 'The dragon is a holy animal, a pond can not contain it. Its head and horns show a noble shape, its transmutations are inexhaustible. Having ascended the Throne (allusion to the fact that 'Dragon' is a fixed epithet of the Emperor), the world is prosperous. It ascends in the air grasping with its claws, the floating clouds follow it' 靈物爲龍兮, 非池可容、頭角崢嶸兮、變化無窮、位正九五兮、時當泰通、攀拏而上兮、潏然雲從。Finally, to make the meaning clearer still, some handbooks add a picture representing the dragon grasping its way through the clouds (see figure X).

Tradition has fixed such a special symbol (*hsiang-hsing* 像形) for each of the elementary postures occurring in the finger technique. 'Vibrato' is illustrated by a cicada creeping up a branch of a tree, three strings pulled at the same time are represented by sailing clouds, the plucking of one string with two fingers at the same time, by a wild goose carrying a reed stalk in its bill (see figure XII), etc. A full list of these symbols will be found below, where the abbreviated signs are discussed.

These symbolic explanations of the various postures of the hands

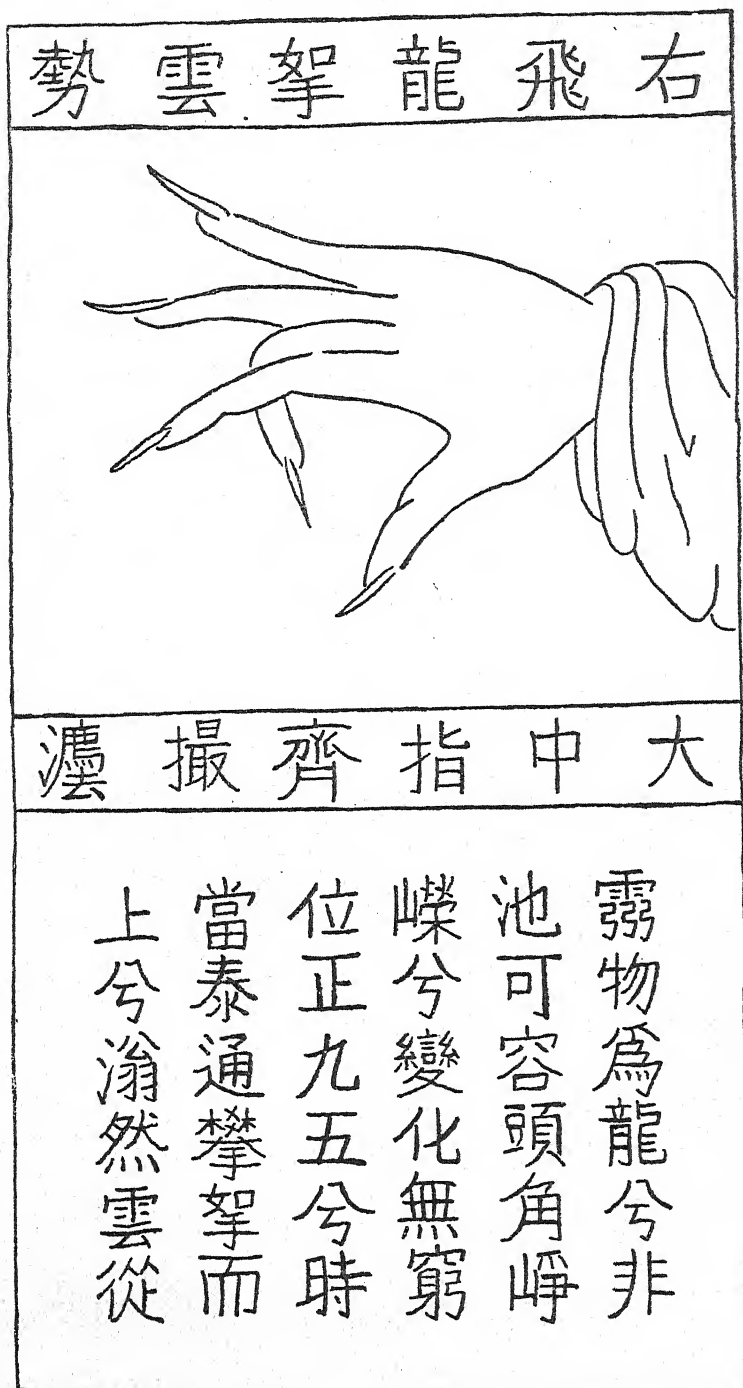


Figure IX. Page from a Lute handbook (Appendix II no. 17), showing a posture of the right hand, with explanatory notes.



are very old ; they may already be found in literary sources of the IIIrd and IVth century A. D. The set of pictures (about 40 in all) belonging to these explanations, however, is of a later date. I could not trace them back further than the Ming period. As this set of pictures is not without artistic value, I may describe their history in a few words.

I found them in three publications of the Ming period ; two of these give the pictures in a rather crude form, the third presents them in a more elaborate and artistic way. The two more primitive versions are found (1.) in the Lute handbook published by the great musician Hu Wên-huan 胡文煥,<sup>1)</sup> entitled *Wên-hui-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 文會堂琴譜, and (2.) in the picture-encyclopedia<sup>2)</sup> *San-ts'ai-t'u-hui* 三才圖會. The more elaborate version is to be found in a famous Ming handbook for the Lute, the *Yang-ch'un-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 陽春堂琴譜. It is not without interest to try to establish the relation between these editions.

The *Wên-hui-t'ang* handbook is the oldest source ; its preface is dated 1596 (the last sentence of the preface running : 譜成於何時、時蓋萬曆丙申下元也). A specimen page of this handbook is reproduced on figure XII. As to the date of the *San-ts'ai* encyclopedia, its latest preface is dated 1609. The *Yang-ch'un-t'ang* handbook bears no date at all; still it is possible to fix approximately when it was published. This handbook was compiled

1) Hu Wên-huan, style : Tê-fu 德甫 (or also : Tê-wên 德文), literary name : Ch'üan-an 全菴 (or also Chin-an 金菴), and Pao-ch'in-chü-shih 抱琴居士. This interesting personality, a typical Ming literatus, would be well worth a special study. He was a man of elegant tastes, who combined an ardent love for old books and antique Lutes, with interest in the theatre and its fair inmates, and in the lighter genres of poetry. His collection of books and rare manuscripts was well known, and he enjoyed great fame as a Lute expert. Besides he wrote numerous plays, and was considered one of the greatest dramatists of the Ming period. Most of his plays, however, are practically unknown : they probably slumber in forgotten corners of Chinese libraries. Hu Wên-huan showed his bibliophilic zeal in publishing an extensive collection of rare works acquired by him ; this collection bears the name of *Ko-chih-ts'ung-shu* 格致叢書. It contained 346 items, divided over 37 categories ; 47 items were published separately. A list of the contents of this *ts'ung-shu* is given in the *Ts'ung-shu-shu-mu-wei-pien* 叢書書目彙編 (Shanghai 1929), page 337. Complete copies of this collection, however, do not seem to exist ; I myself at least never came across one. Occasionally, however, I obtained separate items. These show that Hu Wên-huan's reprints were fine specimens of Ming block prints, carefully collated and printed in graceful characters, editions in no way inferior to the celebrated *Chi-ku-ko* 汲古閣 reprints, published by Mao Chin (毛晉, 1599-1659). It is to be regretted that no attempt has been made to collect all the writings of Hu Wên-huan, and to publish them together. Data about his life, too, are scattered over various sources. One shall look in vain for his biography in the *Ming-shih* 明史. Only the *Ming-tz'ü-tsung* 明詞綜 gives in ch. 10 a short biographical note.

2) For a description of this interesting Ming encyclopedia cf. S. Y. Teng & K. Biggerstaff, *An annotated bibliography of selected Chinese reference works*, Yenching Journal of Chinese studies, Monograph no. 12 (Peking 1936), p. 124.

by Chang Ta-ming 張大命, a well-known Lute master of the Ming period, who lived in Fukien province. His first great work on the Lute was the *Ch'in-ching* 琴經, a work on the Lute in general, without tunes in notation; it was published in 1609 (cf. Appendix II, no. 5). Now in his preface to the *Yang-ch'un-t'ang* handbook, Chang Ta-ming states that after having published a work of a more general nature like the *Ch'in-ching*, he felt it necessary to supplement this with a handbook containing tunes in notation; 'The Lute needs a handbook with tunes in notation, just as a cart needs its two thills' 琴之必需夫譜猶車之不可廢兩轅也. From this we may conclude that the *Yang-ch'un-t'ang* handbook was published some time after 1609, the date of the *Ch'in-ching*. Further, the famous scholar and calligrapher Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (董其昌, 1555-1636) added an undated preface to this handbook. In this preface he says that he met Chang Ta-ming in Fukien when traveling there on official business (不佞客宦閩中與右袞張生有一日之知). Now it appears from Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's biography (*Ming-shih* 明史, ch. 288) that he visited South China in official capacity in the year 1622 (天啓二年命往南方採輯先朝章疏及遺事 'he was ordered to proceed to the south to collect documents and other historical materials relating to the former dynasty'). Therefore we shall not be very wrong when we place the date of the *Yang-ch'un-ch'in-pu* somewhere round 1625. Thus this publication is considerably later than the *Wên-hui-t'ang* handbook, and the *San-ts'ai* encyclopedia. We may assume that Chang Ta-ming had the pictures of the *Wên-hui-t'ang* handbook re-drawn by a skilled artist. The set of pictures as published by him offers a good example of the style of painting current during the Ming period (see figures X and XI). The reader may compare the *Wên-hui-t'ang* picture reproduced in figure XII, and the *Yang-ch'un-t'ang* version of the same picture in figure XI.

During the Ch'ing period the pictures were mostly left out, and the publishers of Lute handbooks contented themselves with reproducing the sketches of the right and left hands in various postures, together with their explanations. The series of pictures, however, found its way to Japan. In 1746 Satō Itchō 佐藤一張 published an introductory handbook for the Chinese Lute, entitled *Kokin-seigi* 古琴精義. This book reproduces the set of pictures of the *Yang-ch'un-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, in a slightly revised form.

Before going on to a more detailed discussion of the various movements that constitute the finger technique, and the abbreviated signs by which they are indicated, a few general remarks about the terminology used are necessary.

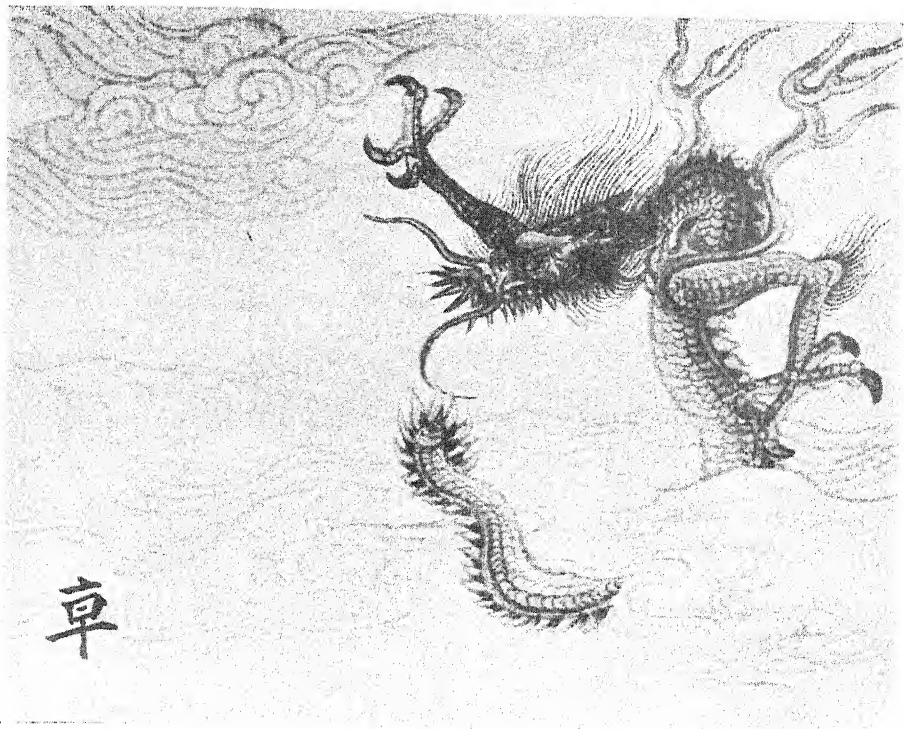


Figure X. Symbolic picture illustrating the finger technique (from a Japanese manuscript copy of the Yang-ch'un-t'ang-ch'in-pu).

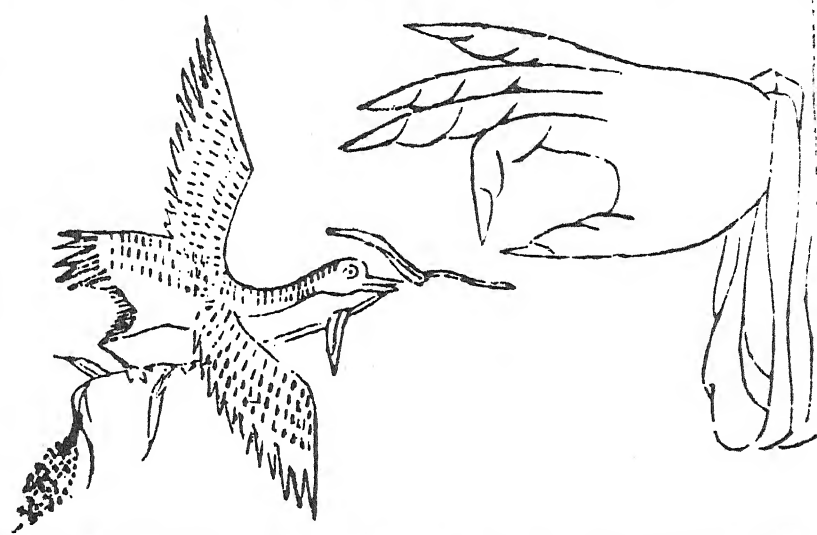


Figure XI. Symbolic picture illustrating the finger technique (same source as figure XI).

文會堂琴譜卷三

勢蘆御鴈賓

指食大手右



捻譜作念  
以兩手指捻起  
一絃放之有聲  
曰捻

三

Figure XII. Symbolic picture illustrating the finger technique (from: Wên-hui-t'ang-ch'in-pu. The photostat was kindly sent me by the Library of Congress, Washington).



First it must be remembered that when the player has his Lute lying before him on the table, ready to be played, the end with the tuning pegs is on his right (see figure III in the first chapter of this essay). Then the thirteen *hui* 徽, studs inlaid in the varnish, appear along the side farthest from the player; this side is called *wai* 外, 'outside'. The space between the *hui* varies greatly; each of these intervening spaces is theoretically divided into ten equal parts, called *fên* 分. These *fên* are not indicated on the instrument: the player must learn to find them by practice. The *hui* are numbered 1-13, counting from right to left, and the *fên* are numbered 1-10. The player should see in his mind the *hui* and *fên* lengthened to lines running transversally over the whole breadth of the Lute. Thus when the handbook says: 'Press with the left thumb the fifth string down on 9/3,' the player knows that he must choose the spot where a perpendicular line, starting from 9/3 along the outer side of the body of the Lute, crosses the fifth string. It is along the row of *hui* that the thickest string, emitting the lowest note, is strung. This string is indicated by the number 1, the others by the numbers 2-7. Thus the string nearest to the player, on the inner side (*nei* 内), which is the thinnest and produces the highest note, is indicated by the number 7.

In the notation the numbers indicating the strings are written in large characters; they form, so to speak, the marrow of the notation, and easily strike the eye when one looks over a passage of Lute music in notation (see figures XIV and XV). The numbers indicating *hui* and *fên* are written in smaller characters, easily distinguishable by their size and location (right top corner of a combination of *chien-tzû*) from those numerals that indicate the strings.

Needless to say that just as in ordinary Chinese writing, also the *chien-tzû* of the Lute notation are written in vertical columns, to be read from right to left. And just as in an ordinary Chinese text the commentary and notes are added in between the text, but in smaller characters and in two columns; in the same way the columns of *chien-tzû* of ordinary size (called *chêng-wên* 正文), are interspersed with *chien-tzû* in smaller type (called *fu-wên* 副文). The *chêng-wên* indicate the notes, the *fu-wên* various 'graces', and general indications such as *vibrato*, *piano*, etc. For a specimen passage of Lute notation cf. figures XIV and XV. The small circles which in an ordinary Chinese text stand for commas and full stops, here have the function of the bars in our musical scores.

It must always remain an invidious undertaking to describe a musical technique in words. This applies *a fortiori* to oriental music. Oriental and western music show so many fundamental differences, that it is a

hazardous task to translate oriental technical terms by our own. Such renderings can never be accepted without considerable reserve. While describing the finger technique of the Lute, I therefore have tried to avoid as much as possible the use of western technical musical terminology; this method has made my explanations perhaps rather verbose, but I hope that a greater degree of accuracy has thereby been obtained.

Below I list about 50 of the elementary *chien-tzú*. The only western book wherein some of these abbreviations are discussed, is the work on Chinese music by G. Soulié (cf. Appendix I no. 3). As, however, Soulié's informant was apparently not a competent Lute expert, there occur many mistakes in the explanations. These are corrected below.

On the accompanying plate (figure XIII) I have written out 54 abbreviated signs; those selected are the *chien-tzú* that occur most frequently in the Lute notation. Many of the *chien-tzú* that remain are but combinations of those discussed here. My explanations are based on those given in the standard handbooks, and they have been verified by some Lute masters in Peking. Special attention has been given to the symbolic explanations of each movement.

1. *San* 散: this string should be played by the right hand only, the left hand not touching the string.

2. *T'o* 托: the thumb of the right hand pulls a string outwards. Explained as 'A crane dancing in a deserted garden' 虛庭鶴舞. Also as 'A crane dancing in the wind' 風前鶴舞. The meaning is that the touch should be firm, but at the same time loose.

3. *Po* 擘 (sometimes read *p'i* 劈): the thumb of the right hand pulls a string inwards (with the nail). Explanation same as 2.

4. *Mo* 抹 (Soulié wrongly reads *mei*): the index pulls a string inward. 'A crane singing in the shadow' 鶴鳴在陰; from the accompanying picture it appears that the shadow of a bamboo grove is meant. The touch of the index should be as firm as that of the thumb, but less jerky; a smooth movement should be aimed at.

5. *T'iao* 挑: the index pulls a string outward. Explanation same as 4.

6. *Kou* 勾: the middle finger pulls a string inward. 'A lonely duck looks back to the flock' 孤鶩顧群. The curve of the middle finger should be modelled on that of the neck of the wild duck: curved but not angular. If the middle finger is too much hooked, the touch will be jerky.

7. *T'i* 剔: the middle finger pulls a string outward. Explanation same as 6.

8. *Ta* 打: the ring finger pulls a string inwards. 'The Shang-

1 廿	10 余	19 券	28 曼	37 中	46 弁
2 毛	11 厂	20 玄	29 云	38 夕	47 内
3 尸	12 早	21 詔	30 車	39 卜	48 徠
4 木	13 𢇛	22 𠂔	31 𠂔	40 シ	49 色
5 乚	14 团	23 𠂔	32 𠂔	41 𠂔	50 午
6 ㄣ	15 𠂔	24 弗	33 爰	42 𠂔	51 足
7 弓	16 𠂔	25 𠂔	34 𠂔	43 立	52 色
8 丁	17 𠂔	26 𠂔	35 大	44 𠂔	53 𠂔
9 亨	18 合	27 省	36 人	45 𠂔	54 𠂔

Figure XIII. Selected chien-tzû, abbreviated signs used in Lute notation.

yang bird hopping about' 商羊鼓舞. The Shang-yang is a fabulous bird, said to have only one leg. The idea is that, in contradistinction to the smooth movements of the index and middle finger, the touch of the ring finger should be short and crisp.

9. *Chai* 摘 (Soulié wrongly reads *ti*): the ring finger pulls a string outward. Explanation same as above.

10. *Ch'üan-fu* 全扶 (Soulié wrongly reads *ch'üan-mo*): index, middle finger and ring finger each pull at the same time a different string, making the three strings produce together one sound. 'Light clouds sailing in the wind' 風送輕雲. The touch should be light and delicate, so that the three notes melt together.

11. *Li* 歷 (also explained as *tu* 度): the index lightly passes over two or three strings in succession, in outward direction (Soulié says inward, which is wrong). Explanation same as 5.

12. *Ts'o* 撮: a chord; two fingers pull two strings at the same time, making them sound together. The strings to be pulled are indicated by their numbers, written on either side of the perpendicular stroke in the center of the abbreviated sign. The normal chord is a combination 托勾; the opposite combination, 擘剔, called *fan-ts'o* 反撮, is indicated by adding the character *fan* 反 on top of the *chien-tzû* for *ts'o* 撮. 'A flying dragon grasping the clouds' 飛龍拏雲. Explained above, with a translation of the pertaining *hsing* 興. See also figure X.

13. *P'o-tz'ü* 潑刺: index, middle and ring finger together pull two strings, once inward (*p'o*), and immediately after outward (*ts'u*). 'A swimming fish moving its tail' 游魚擺尾. The illustration shows that a carp is intended. A measured, broadly sweeping touch should be aimed at.

14. *Ta-yüan* 打圓: a movement consisting of seven sounds, played on two strings. First 挑 on the string nearest to the body, and 勾 on the string further away; a slight pause; then rapidly repeat the same movement twice; again a short pause, and end up with a 挑 on the string one started with. This movement can be executed on any pair of strings, but usually it is found with regard to 1 and 4, 2 and 5, 3 and 6, 4 and 7. It is customary in the notation to write the first 挑 and 勾 in *chien-tzû*, and then to add underneath in a smaller character the *chien-tzû* for *ta-yüan*. 'A holy tortoise emerges from the water' 神龜出水. The picture shows a tortoise, climbing a small island in a pond. One should try to imitate the crawling movement of the legs of the tortoise: short, but determined touches, in absolutely the same rhythm.

15. *Pei-so* 背鎖 (Soulié wrongly reads *pei-chao*): three sounds are



produced on one and the same string, by a succession of 剔抹挑. 'A wild fowl flapping its wings' 鷗鷺翺翺. Crisp touches in rapid succession.

16. *Tuan-so* 短鎖: one and the same string produces five sounds, first a slow 抹勾, followed by *pei-so*. Explanation same as 15.

17. *Ch'ang-so* 長鎖: one and the same string produces seven sounds, first 抹挑抹勾, then add *pei-so*. Explanation same as 15.

18. *Lun* 輪 'a wheel': this is a rapid movement, executed on one string, viz. 摘剔挑 in quick succession. It should be executed very lightly and delicately, so as to cause the three sounds to melt together. This term in itself is very aptly chosen: it implies that the three fingers should imitate the spokes of a wheel. When a wheel turns round swiftly, each separate spoke is no longer visible. 'A purple crab walking sideways' 紫蟹傍行; the same idea, differently expressed. One should think of the rapid movement of the legs of small crabs when they scurry over the sand. Among the movements of the right hand, this is the only one that might be compared with the 'graces' executed by the left hand (vibrato, etc.); often Lute players introduce *lun* when it is not written in the notation; for the movement is so rapid that it does not affect the rhythm. Therefore a simple 挑 or 抹 may be replaced by a *lun*. A discreet appliance of *lun* may give a tune additional charm, but one should guard against overdoing it: avoiding cheap effects is one of the most important rules for the Lute player. *Lun* is very much used in p'i-p'a music (琵琶, the four-stringed guitar), where its technical appellation is *ta-i-ko-lun-tzû* 打一個輪子 'to beat a wheel'.

19. *Pan-lun* 半輪 'half a wheel': the same movement as the preceding, but with middle and ring finger only.

20. *Ju-i* 如一 'as one': two strings sound together. 'Female and male phoenix singing in harmony' 鸞鳳和鳴.

21. *Shuang-tan* 雙彈 'double pulling': one string produces two sounds in rapid succession; usually 抹勾. 'Cold ravens pecking at the snow' 寒鴉啄雪. The picture shows a flight of emaciated ravens on a barren tree in a winter landscape: they peck at the snow that covers the dry branches, hoping to discover something to eat. The movement should be executed with the very tips of the fingers, a short, crisp, pecking touch.

22. *So-ling* 索鈴 (properly the name of a musical instrument, consisting of several bells hung on a cord; when the cord is pulled, the bells ring together): the left hand glides lightly over several strings in succession, while the right index moves over the same strings in a light manner 挑, simultaneously with the movement of the left hand; the

movements of both hands should be strictly parallel. 'Bells hung on a cord being shaken' 振索鳴鈴. The aim is a subtle, tinkling effect. Properly this movement belongs to the 'floating sounds' *fan-yin* 泛音.

23. *K'un* 滾 'welling up' (I do not know how Soulié obtained his reading *liao*): 剔 over several strings in succession, from 7 to 2, or from 6 to 1. 'A heron bathing in a whirlpool' 鷺浴盤渦. One should think of a heron taking a bath in the small eddies of a stream in the shallow places along its banks: the whirling movement of the water, together with the flapping of the wings should suggest the character of the movement. Mostly played on the free strings, with the right hand only; occasionally, however, one string must be pressed down with the left hand. When executed correctly, this movement, together with the next item (its opposite), constitutes a very attractive motif. A later, and technically extremely difficult version of the tune *Liu-shui* 流水 'Flowing streams', has one part consisting of practically nothing but variations on this *k'un*. When it is played by a virtuoso (ordinary players would hardly dare to touch this tune!), one hears the babbling of water all through the melody: now the melody dominates, then the sounds of water, a fascinating effect. Cf., however, my remarks on this tune, in ch. 4. At present in Peking the Lute master Chêng Ying-sun 鄭穎孫 is a well-known player of especially this tune.

24. *Fu* 拂 'to brush': the opposite of the preceding item, played over string 1-6 or 2-7.

25. *Tsai-tso* 再作: 'repeat the preceding movement'. This and the following ten items do not represent notes: they are indications of a general character.

26. *Ts'ung-kou-tsai-tso* 從勾再作: 'repeat the preceding passage, from the place indicated by the bracket'. Instead of 從勾 one may also find *ts'ung-t'ou* 從頭 (abbreviated into 暨). meaning *da capo*.

27. *Shao-hsi* 少息: a short pause.

28. *Ju-man* 入慢: *ritardando*.

29. *Chih* 至 'till'; for instance: 滾六至一 'kun from the 6th till the 1st string.'

30. *Lien* 連: *legato*.

31. *Ch'ing* 輕: *piano*.

32. *Chung* 重: *forte*.

33. *Huan* 緩: *lente*.

34. *Chi* 急: *presto*.

35. *Ta-chih* 大指: the left thumb. This and the following items all regard the finger technique of the left hand.

36. *Shih-chih* 食指: the left index.  
 37. *Chung-chih* 中指: the left middle finger.  
 38. *Ming-chih* 名指: the left ring finger.  
 39. *Ch'o* 緯: a finger of the left hand, before pressing down a string on the spot indicated by *hui* and *fên*, starts about 5 mm. to the left of that place, and quickly glides to the right, till the place indicated is reached. The result is a rising, prolonged note. 'A wild pheasant ascending a tree' 野雉登木. The sound produced should resemble the cry of the wild pheasant, who sings in the morning. Soulié's explanation of this and the following item is mistaken.

40. *Chu* 注: the opposite of the preceding item: One starts about 5 mm. to the *right* of the spot indicated, and then glides down to the left, till the spot is reached. Explanation as in no. 39. Both *ch'o* and *chu* are produced *simultaneously* with the pulling of the string by the right hand. They should be distinguished from *shang* and *hsia* 上, 下 (cf. below, no. 45), which are executed *after* the right hand has pulled the string.

41. *Yin* 吟: *vibrato*. A finger of the left hand quickly moves up and down over the spot indicated. 'A cold cicada bemoans the coming of autumn' 寒蟬吟秋. The plaintive, rocking drone of the cicadas (well known to all foreigners living in China and Japan!) should be imitated. Of this *yin* there exist more than ten varieties. There is the *ch'ang-yin* 長吟, a drawn out vibrato, that should recall 'the cry of a dove announcing rain' 鳴鳩喚雨; the *hsi-yin* 細吟, a thin vibrato, that should make one think of 'confidential whispering' 喁喁私語; the *yu-yin* 遊吟, swinging vibrato, that should evoke the image of 'fallen blossoms floating down with the stream' 落花隨水, etc. Remarkable is the *ting-yin* 定吟; the vacillating movement of the finger should be so subtle as to be hardly noticeable. Some handbooks say, that one should not move the finger at all, but let the timbre be influenced by the pulsation of the blood in the fingertip, pressing the string down on the board a little more fully and heavily than usual.

42. *Jou* 猻: *vibrato ritardando*. A vibrato somewhat broader and more accentuated than *yin*. Properly the character should be pronounced *nao*, meaning 'monkey'; but Lute players pronounce it *jou*. Doubtless the character *jou* 揉, meaning 'to twist, to rub' is the proper one. It was replaced by that read *nao*, because, for use as *chien-tzû*, the 94th radical is more distinct than the 64th one. And further the symbolic association may also have played a rôle: for the vibrato *ritardando* should suggest 'the cry of a monkey while climbing a tree' 號猿升木.

43. *Chuang* 撞 'to strike against': after the right hand has pulled a string, the left makes a quick, jerky movement, up and down to the right of the spot indicated.

44. *Chin-fu* 進復 'advancing and returning': after the right hand has pulled the string, the left glides upwards to a certain point indicated, then glides down again till it reaches the point where it started, or another spot, as indicated in the notation.

45. *Shang* 上 'ascending', and *hsia* 下 'descending': properly an elaborate form of the preceding item, but often interchangeable with it. *Shang* is gliding to the right, in stages. For instance, a string is pulled while the left hand presses it down on the spot indicated by the 9th *hui*. The notation adds the remark: 上八四, 七八, meaning 'glide upwards till 8/4, then till 7/8.' *Hsia* is the same movement, but in opposite direction. Often *shang* and *hsia* count as many as three or four stages, and form part of the melody. Therefore movements like these properly should not be called 'graces': they do not 'grace' the original note, but are notes in themselves.<sup>3)</sup>

46. *Fên-k'ai* 分開 'divide and open': a peculiar movement, which makes one and the same string produce four sounds in succession. For instance, the right hand pulls a string while the left presses it down on the 9th *hui*; when the tone is still resounding, the left hand glides to the right in a resolute and bold movement till the next *hui* is reached, stays there for an infinitesimal moment, then glides back to the initial spot, and just when it arrives there, the right hand again pulls the string.

47. *Yen* 掩 'to cover': the thumb, middle or ring finger of the left hand taps a string, producing a low, dull sound; the right hand does not touch the string. This touch is mostly executed with the left thumb; e.g., the ring finger presses a string down on the 9th *hui*, and the right hand pulls this string: thereafter one leaves the ring finger on the same spot, but taps the string with the left thumb, on the place indicated by the 8th *hui*. 'The woodpecker picking a tree' 幽禽啄木. As many others, this symbol is remarkably well chosen from an acoustic point of view.

48. *Wang-lai* 往來 'coming and going': a combination of *chin-fu* (no. 44) and *yin* (no. 41). A finger of the left hand, after the right has pulled the string, moves one *hui* to the right, produces 'vibrato', then returns to the original *hui*, and produces 'vibrato' there; and repeats this movement. After the first vibrato, the sound caused by the pulling of the string by the right hand will have died away: the difficulty is to

3) Cf. the very pertinent remarks about the 'graces' in Indian music, in A. H. Fox Strangeways, *The music of Hindostân*, (Oxford 1914), ch. VII.



revive the sound by moving to the right and to the left with a strong jerk. 'A phoenix, having alighted on a branch, combs its tail feathers with its bill' 栖鳳梳翎. Any one who has observed a bird combing its feathers will recognize how cleverly this image is chosen: one sees the broad movement with which the bird first arranges the feathers (*chin-fu*), occasionally interrupted by short, tugging movements for discarding the down (*vibrato*).

49. *T'ao-ch'i* 摺起 'pulling up and raising': a movement peculiar to the left hand only, executed with the thumb. When the ring finger is pressing a string down, for instance on the 9th *hui*, the left thumb pulls the string. The same note would be produced if the thumb of the right hand pulled the string, while the left ring finger pressed it down on the 9th *hui*; but the timbre is entirely different. The accompanying explanation 'Two immortals transmitting the Way' 二仙傳道 seems enigmatical. It was explained to me as follows. An adept who really understands 'the Way' (*Tao*), knows that words are of no use in explaining it; cf. the opening sentence of the *Tao-tê-ching* 'The *Tao* that can be explained is not the eternal *Tao*' 道可道非常道. Therefore, when two adepts discuss *Tao*, they just utter a short, abrupt sound, which is said to comprise the cosmic function of *Tao*. This idea *Taoism* has borrowed from the *Ch'an* (禪, Jap. *Zen*) school of Buddhism; in *Ch'an* technical terminology this sound is called *ho* (喝, Jap. *katsu*). For a good description of the all important role of this sound in *Ch'an* Buddhism, cf. D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, first series (London 1927), p. 279-280. *Zen* Buddhism, in its turn, doubtless borrowed this idea of the all-embracing magical power of a single sound from *Mantrayana* teachings, where, for instance, the vowel *a* (阿) is considered as the receptacle of all the deepest mysteries. The utterance of such a single magic syllable may move all the spiritual agencies of the entire universe. Cf. the article '*a*' in the *Hobogirin*, *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*, Tôkyô 1929. But to return to our present subject: the sound produced should be abrupt and dry.

50. *Hu* 滯 'a sloping bank': the right hand has pulled a string, pressed down by the thumb of the left hand on the 10th *hui*; one waits a moment, then glides with the left thumb to the right, till the 9th *hui* is reached. This gliding movement is called *hu*. It should be slow and emphatic, like dragging something up the sloping bank of a river. After the pause, the sound produced has lost most of its volume: the aim is to utilize the last echo of the sound for the *hu*.

51. *Kuei* 跪 'to kneel': often it will prove inconvenient to press

down a string with the tip of the left ring finger, especially when a *t'ao-ch'i* (no. 49) must be executed on the places indicated by the lower *hui*. In such cases the difficulty is solved by pressing down the string, not with the tip of the left ring finger, but with the back of its first joint. Thus that finger must assume a crooked posture. 'A panther grasping something' 文豹抱物. The idea is to suggest a firm, determined pressure. Soulié's explanation: *pao-chih* 'little finger', is of course entirely erroneous, since the little finger of either hand is never used in Lute music. For this reason in Lute terminology the little finger is called *chin-chih* 禁指 'forbidden finger'.

52. *Fan-ch'i* 泛起 'Here the floating sounds start': a sign warning the player that the succeeding notes are all in 'floating sounds', i. e., harmonics. As has been explained above, the harmonics are produced when the left hand, instead of pressing down a string on the board, just lightly touches it. The delicate touch of the fingers of the left hand is aptly described as 'White butterflies exploring flowers' 粉蝶探花. Where the floating sounds should end, there occurs a sign read *fan-chih* 泛止; the *chien-tzu* consists of the upper part of no. 52. added on top of the character *chih* 止. Soulié's reading *fa* must rest on some mistake. It should be added that floating sounds are only possible on the places indicated by the *hui*, not on the intervening spots.

53. *Fang-ho* 放合 'let go and unite': this touch especially applies to the ring finger of the left hand, and implies a kind of chord. Suppose the right hand has pulled the 3d string, while the ring finger of the left hand was pressing it down on the 9th *hui*. The next note is pulling the 4th string, free. Now, while the 4th string is being pulled, the left ring finger pulls the 3d string, causing both strings to sound together. 'Echo in an empty vale' 空谷傳聲. The accompanying picture shows two recluses standing in a vale, and clapping their hands.

54. *T'ui-ch'u* 推出 'pushing outwards': a touch executed by the middle finger of the left hand. Suppose that the right hand has pulled the first string, while the left middle finger pressed it down on the 13th *hui*; while the next note is being played, the middle finger is left in its position on the *hui*. Then, when the next sound has been produced by the right hand, the left middle finger makes the 1st string sound by pushing it outward. 'A silver pheasant dancing' 白鷗騰踏.

In illustration of the above, I shall now explain two passages in Lute notation, taken from the *Wu-chih-chai* handbook (cf. Appendix II no. 14), and reproduced in figures XIV and XV. To save space the strings are indicated by Roman, the *hui* and *fên* by Arabic numerals. Both

其六

前六句起伏未句字字多情不忍釋手。

起  
上五  
綺

也立

勾勾

上上  
四四  
蜀

廿六女一  
瓜已

菊  
菊

路  
菊

上上  
三  
菊

廿六女一  
各下瓜已

菊

新上  
二下  
大也

起  
也

其一

起手泛音必加誠意方得其旨。

已  
爰  
𦵏

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Figure XIV.

Figure XV.

Two passages from the Wu-chih-chai handbook.

passages are taken from the well known Lute melody *Mo-tzû-pei-ssü* 墨子悲絲 'The philosopher Mo-tzû sorrowing over the silk.' The significance of this tune is understood by reading Mo-tzû, I, 3: *So-jan* 所染, the opening passage: 'Our Master Mo-tzû said with a sigh, when he saw silk being dyed: When silk is dyed with a dark colour, it becomes dark, when dyed with a yellow colour it becomes yellow: its colour changes according to the dye in which it is dipped, etc.' 子墨子言見染絲者而歎曰、染於蒼則蒼、染於黃則黃、所入者變、其色亦變云云。 The philosopher regrets the fact that man, originally pure, becomes soiled by the contact with material life (cf. A. Forke, *Mé Ti, des Sozialethikers und seiner Schüler philosophische Werke*, Berlin 1922, p. 166).

Figure XIV shows the first part of this tune, an extremely attractive prelude, written entirely in harmonics. The gloss says: 'The harmonics of this first part must be played with sincerity, only then the meaning will be fully expressed.' The first line opens with the sign for 'start harmonics' (above, item no. 52); to the right an abbreviation for *huan-tso* 緩作, 'slowly'.

The left middle finger touches I on 9, while the right middle finger pulls the string inwards.

The left thumb touches VI on 9, while the right thumb pulls it outward.

The left middle finger touches II on 9, the right middle finger pulls it inward.

The left thumb touches VII on 9, the right thumb pushes it outward.

The left index moves lightly over VII-II, the right middle finger simultaneously executes *k'un* (no. 23).

The left middle finger touches I on 9, the right middle finger pulls it inward.

The left thumb touches VI on 9, the right thumb pushes it outward. The following two signs being the same as the second bar, they need no explanation.

The left index touches VI on 9, the right middle finger pulls it inward.

The left ring finger touches VII on 10, the right index pushes it outward.

The right index glides lightly over VI and V, connecting them (*ch'ing lien* 輕連), while the left ring finger touches them on 10. It should be noted that if no *hui* is indicated, and if the sign *san* 散 'free strings' is missing, the position of the left hand remains unchanged.

The right middle finger pulls IV inward, the left ring finger still



touching it on 10.

The left thumb touches VI on 9, the right index pushes it outwards. Etc.

Near the end of this passage we find the direction, *miao* 妙, indicating that especially that note is important. The passage ends with the sign *fan-chih* 泛止 'here the harmonics end'.

Figure XV shows the beginning of the sixth part of the same tune. As here no harmonics are employed, the notation is slightly more complicated. The note says: 'The earlier six bars show a rising and subsiding tendency. Every note of the last bar is full of passion, it should not end up in a sloppy way'.

The left thumb presses VI down on 6, with the introductory gliding *chu* (no. 40); the right middle finger pulls it inward. Then the left thumb executes a protracted vibrato on 6, subsequently gliding up to 5.

The left thumb presses VII down on 5, the right index pushes it outwards, the left thumb adds the jerk *chuang* (no. 43).

The right middle finger pulls VI inward, thereafter VII, the left thumb pressing down these strings on 5. Then the left thumb vibrates on 5, and glides up to 4/4. The right middle finger pushes VII outwards, and immediately afterwards pushes outward the free sixth string, making VII and VI sound together (*ju-i* 如一, no. 20). Then the left thumb lightly pulls the nail up from the board, producing a light sound (*chao-ch'i* 爪起, not given in my list).

The right middle finger pulls the free VI inwards.

The left thumb presses down VII on 4/4, the right middle finger pulls it inwards. Add *shuang-tan* (cf. no. 21).

The right middle finger pulls the free VI.

The left thumb presses down VII on 4/4, the right middle finger pulls it inwards. Then the left thumb glides up to 4, thereafter to 3/3.

The left thumb remains on 3/3, the right middle finger pushes it outwards, immediately afterwards pushing the VI free (*ju-i*); after a slight pause, vibrato (*lo-chih-yin* 落指吟, a sort of protracted vibrato, not given in my list), then the left thumb lightly pulls up this same VII.

The right middle finger pulls the free VI.

The left thumb presses down VII on 3/3, the right middle finger pulls it inwards. A thin vibrato (*hsi-yin* 細吟), and the thumb glides up to 2/5 (*erh-pan* 二半).

The left thumb presses VII on 2/5, the right index pushes it outwards.

The *ch'i* 起 in the margin indicates that here again there is a 'rise' in the melodic pattern.

This system of noting down Lute music may seem too complicated and cumbersome to be practical. Yet some regular practice will prove it to be as convenient as our western musical score. Lute experts have no difficulty in playing a new tune at first sight; I actually saw a Chinese Lute master hum a tune he had never seen before, while looking over the notation.

It will be observed that no real notes are indicated. As the various tunings of the Lute are minutely fixed, and all instruments are built on the same pattern (even the number of single silk threads that form one string is fixed), this omission presents the player with no serious difficulty. The pitch is left to individual taste: some like it high, others low. But the pitch proportion between the strings must of course be correct.

More serious is the lack of any sign indicating measure. This is partly made up for by the distribution of the small round circles functioning as bars, and further by such indications as 'slow down', 'accelerate,' etc.

In later times Lute experts have felt these two shortcomings of the *chien-tzû* system. In the 19th century we find some handbooks where the musical note is added to each *chien-tzû* combination in symbols of the *kung-ch'ih* 工尺 system (Soulié, op. cit. p. 36, reproduces a page from such a handbook). These handbooks indicate the measure by a line of dots, running parallel to the *chien-tzû* columns. The distribution of these dots suggests the measure: if the dots are dense, the measure is slow; if sparse, the measure should be accelerated. Yet these systems never won universal approval. Yang Tsung-chi evolved a most elaborate system of *chien-tzû*, with a running explanation alongside (cf. Appendix II, no. 7): in his *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu* he published several of the better known tunes in this notation. For reading this system some special study is necessary, but it is so explicit (both notes and measure being recorded), that I can recommend his handbook to every one who wishes to study Lute music without a master.

In 1931 the musician Wang Kuang-ch'i 王光祈 made an attempt at transcribing the *chien-tzû* in a semi-western way. He used our stave and notes, but of course had to add a great number of special signs (cf. his publication *Fan-i-ch'in-pu-chih-yen-chiu* 翻譯琴譜之研究, Shanghai 1931). The result was a system far more complicated than the original *chien-tzû*, and his method was never adopted by other workers in the

field. Where typically Chinese things are concerned, it will as a rule be very difficult to improve upon the methods the old Chinese devised for dealing with them.

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## CHAPTER THE SIXTH

### ASSOCIATIONS

#### 1. LUTE AND CRANE

General background: most of the objects that surround the scholar originally had a magical meaning.—They are intended to strengthen his vital powers, and prolong his life.—The crane: symbol of longevity.—Closely connected with the Immortals.—The constant companion of the scholar.—Rearing cranes the special task of the Lute player.—Lute players celebrate the excellent qualities of the crane.

Literary tradition has surrounded the scholar with numerous attributes, which have come to be considered as the symbols of literary life. Among this group the Lute occupies a prominent place. Of the others, those that are constantly mentioned in connection with the Lute are the crane, the pine and the plum tree, and the sword.

The origin of these associations dates from far before the establishment of any literary tradition ; what their exact beginnings were, we shall probably never know. Yet it is not impossible to make a fairly accurate surmise as to at least the direction in which the solution must be sought. Later literary tradition suggests that the reasons were of a purely aesthetic character. It says that the crane was dear to the scholar because of its graceful movements and dignified behaviour, that the plum blossoms delighted his eye with their exquisite colour, that the gnarled shape of the pine tree taught him antique beauty, and that the sword reminded him of the straightness and purity of the Superior Man. Now these explanations hold true for later times, but they do not bring us any nearer to an understanding of their origin. For in that remote past the literatus did not yet exist.

There did exist, however, the head of the family, who, during the sacrifices to the ancestors, officiated as priest, and whose duty it was to see that by a proper appliance of magical ceremonies evil influences were warded off, and that by a strengthening of the vital essences, the family line was continued and crops were plentiful. Now, as we shall see below, crane, plum tree, pine and sword are all, just like the Lute, credited with a great amount of Yang power, and for that reason give protection



against evil forces. It would seem probable that these objects, in later times praised as the faithful companions of the scholar, originally surrounded the head of the family, and played some part in magical ceremonies, whereby their vital forces were transferred to the officiant. Literary tradition tried to ignore these ancient magic beliefs; but they are firmly rooted in popular religion, and time and again evidence of their existence appears also in literary sources.

The crane is one of the traditional Chinese symbols of longevity. Just like the tortoise, it is said to live to more than thousand years. *Ho-ling* 鶴齡 'crane age' is a much used metaphor for advanced years (cf. the book entitled *Ho-ling-lu* 鶴齡錄 by the Ming author Li Ch'ing 李清: biographies of people who attained to high ages). The idea of high age, when carried through logically, leads to that of immortality. Therefore the crane is associated with the *hsien-jên* 仙人, the Immortals: the crane is their favourite mount, and many a holy recluse is said to have disappeared from human ken riding on a crane; cf., for instance, the story about Hsün Huan 荀環 in the *Shu-i-chi* 述異記 (18th century). Further the *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* (Appendix II, no. 6) tells the following story about Chang Chih-ho (張志和, 8th century): 'Chang Chih-ho loved to drink wine, and when inebriated used to play his Lute all night long without resting. One evening there suddenly appeared a grey crane, which danced round about him. Chang then took his Lute, and riding on its back, disappeared in the sky' 張志和好飲酒、醉則鼓琴、終夜不休、一夕忽有雲鶴旋繞、張遂携琴跨鶴以昇。 There are also many stories of Taoist recluses and priests who transformed themselves into cranes; the *Shên-i-ching* 神異經 (6-7th century) relates that the Taoist recluse Hsü Tso-ching 徐佐卿, having taken the shape of a crane, was wounded by an arrow of the Emperor Ming Huang; the *Hsü-sou-shên-chi* 續搜神記 (ascribed to the Chin writer T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛, but evidently a much later production) tells the story of a man Ting Ling-wei 丁令威, who long after his death revisited his native town in the shape of a crane; and the *Lieh-hsien-chuan* 列仙傳 (about the beginning of our era: cf. the remarks by P. Pelliot, *Journal Asiatique*, June-August 1912, p. 149) says that Su-hsien-kung 蘇仙公 after his death visited the earth in the shape of a white crane. Because of its constant association with the Immortals the crane is called *hsien-ch'in* 仙禽. Then we find the crane as soul bird, the bird that conveys the soul of the deceased to the upper regions; cf. the Chinese custom of placing the figure of a crane with spread wings on the coffin in a funeral procession.

The *hsüan-ho* 玄鶴, or Dark Crane, especially is credited with a fabu-

lously long life. The *Ku-chin-chu* 古今注 (by Ts'ui Piao 崔豹, Chin 晉 period) says: 'When a crane has reached the age of one thousand years, it turns a dark blue colour; after another thousand years it turns black, and then it is called dark crane' 鶴千載變蒼, 又千載變黑, 所謂玄鶴也。 Since olden times especially this dark crane has been associated with music. The *Jui-ying-t'u-chi* 瑞應圖記 (ascribed to Sun Jou-chih 孫柔之, of the Liang period) says: 'A dark crane shall appear at a time when there is a Ruler who understands music. When in olden times, Huang Ti executed music on the K'un-lun mountain for all the Spirits to dance, on his right side there flew 16 dark cranes' 玄鶴王者知音樂之節則至、昔黃帝習樂崑崙以舞衆神, 有玄鶴二八翔其右。

Sixteen dark cranes appear also in a story related by the great historian Ssü-ma Ch'ien in his *Shih-chi* 史記, ch. 24. This story exists in more than one translation already (cf. Chavannes, *Mémoires Historiques*, part III, p. 287; M. Courant, op. cit., p. 208; G. Soulié, op. cit., p. 4-5); because of its great importance for our subject, however, I may be allowed to quote it here once more. 'When Duke Ling of Wei (534-493 B.C.) was travelling to Chin, he halted on the bank of the river Pu. In the middle of the night he heard the sounds of a Lute being played. He asked the members of his suite, but all respectfully said that no one had heard the sounds. Then the Duke summoned Master Chüan, and said to him: "I have heard the sounds of a Lute being played, but when I asked my suite no one had heard it. Thus it seems that it is caused by a spirit or a ghost. Write this tune down for me." Master Chüan assented and, seating himself in the correct position, having placed his Lute before him, he listened and noted down the tune. The next morning he said: "I have obtained the tune now, but I have not yet learned it. I beg you for one more night to learn it thoroughly." The Duke agreed, and yet another night passed. On the following morning he reported that he had mastered the tune. Then they left that place, and proceeded to Chin. They were received by Duke P'ing of Chin (557-532 B.C.), who gave a banquet for them on the Shih-hui Terrace. When all had come under the influence of the wine, Duke Ling said: "When on my way here I heard a new tune; permit me to let you hear it." When Duke P'ing agreed, Duke Ling made Master Chüan sit down by the side of Master K'uang, place his Lute before him and play it. But before he was half through, Master K'uang put his hand on the strings (to deaden the sounds), and said: "That is the music of a doomed state; one must not listen to it." Duke P'ing asked: "What is the origin of this tune?" Master K'uang answered: "It was made by Master Yen, to please the

tyrant Chou. When Wu-wang had defeated Chou, Master Yen fled to the east, and drowned himself in the river Pu. Therefore it must have been on the bank of that river that this tune was heard. Who first hears this tune, his state will be divided." Duke P'ing said: "I have a great love for music. I wish to hear this tune to the end." Then Master Ch'uan played the entire tune. Then Duke P'ing said: "Are there no tunes that are still more sinister than this one?" Master K'uang said: "There are." "Could you play them for me?" The Master answered: "My lord's virtue and righteousness are not great enough for that. I may not play them for you." But the Duke said again: "I have a great love for music; I wish to hear them." Then Master K'uang could not but draw his Lute unto him, and play. When he had played one, there appeared sixteen dark cranes that alighted on the gate of the hall. When he played the second time, they stretched their necks and cried, they spread out their wings and started to dance. Duke P'ing was overcome with joy, and leaving his seat he drank the health of Master K'uang. Having returned to his seat, he asked: "Are there no other tunes that are still more sinister than this one?" Master K'uang said: "Yes, there are those by which in olden times Huang Ti effected a great reunion of ghosts and spirits. But my lord's virtue and righteousness are not great enough to allow you to hear this music. And if you hear it, you will perish." Duke P'ing said: "I am advanced in years, and I have a great love of music. I want to hear these tunes." Then Master K'uang could not but draw his Lute unto him, and play. When he had played one, white clouds rose in the north-west. And when he played another, there was a storm wind, followed by a torrent, that made the tiles fly from the roof. All that were present fled, and Duke P'ing, in a great fright, threw himself down near the entrance of the hall.

衛靈公之時，將之晉，至於濮水之上舍，夜半時聞鼓琴聲，問左右皆對曰不聞，乃召師涓曰，吾聞鼓琴音，問左右皆不聞，其狀似鬼神，爲我聽而寫之，師涓曰諾，因端坐援琴聽而寫之，明日曰臣得之矣，然未習也，請宿習之，靈公曰可，因復宿，明日報曰，習矣，即去之晉，見晉平公，平公置酒於施惠之臺，酒酣靈公曰，今者來聞新聲，請奏之，平公曰可，即令師涓坐師曠旁，援琴鼓之，未終，師曠撫而止之，曰，此亡國之聲也，不可聽，平公曰，何道出，師曠曰，師延所作也，與紂爲靡靡之樂，武王伐紂，師延東走，自投濮水之中，故聞此聲必於濮水之上，先聞此聲者國削，平公曰，寡人所好者音也，願遂聞之，師涓鼓而終之，平公曰，音無此最悲乎，師曠曰，有，平公曰，可得聞乎，師曠曰，君德義薄，不可以聽之，平公曰，寡人所好者音也，願聞之，師曠不得已，援琴而鼓之，一奏之有玄鶴二八集乎廊門，再奏之延頸而鳴，舒翼而舞，平公大喜，起而爲師曠壽，反坐問曰，音無此最悲乎，師曠曰，有昔者黃帝以大合鬼神，今君德義薄，不足以聽之，聽之將敗，平公曰，寡人老矣，所好者音也，願遂聞之，師曠不得已，援琴而鼓之，一奏之有白雲從西北起，再奏之大風至而雨隨之，飛廊瓦，左右皆奔走，平公恐懼伏於廊屋之間，晉國大旱，赤地三年。

Thereafter Chin was besought by a drought that scorched the earth for three years in succession." This story, that bears a most archaic character (note that just as in the story quoted above, instead of 16 we find 'twice 8'), not only furnishes a good example of the relation of the dark crane to Lute music, but also illustrates in a striking way the awe-inspiring qualities with which the ancient Chinese credited this music.<sup>5)</sup> Something of the ominous atmosphere of this old tale has been preserved in a number of ghost stories connected with the Lute of later date. For some specimens of these see below, the fourth section of this chapter.

It is only occasionally, however, that we find faint echos of the oldest magical character of the association between Lute and crane. In later times literary tradition has entirely overgrown these old beliefs; they are replaced by considerations of a purely aesthetical character. When the scholar is playing the Lute in his garden pavilion, a couple of cranes should be leisurely stalking about. Their graceful movements should inspire the rhythm of the finger technique, and their occasional cries direct the thoughts of the player to unearthly things. For also these cries of the crane have a special meaning. They are said to penetrate unto Heaven (cf. *Shih-ching* 詩經, Hsiao-ya X: 鶴鳴于九臯, 聲聞于天. 'The crane cries in the marshes, its sound is heard in the skies'), and the female crane conceives when it hears the cry of the male (cf. the *Ch'in-ching* 禽經, authorship uncertain: 鶴以聲交而孕).

The crane is described as having a great love for Lute music. The *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* (cf. Appendix II, no. 6) says: 'Lin Pu (967-1028) greatly enjoyed playing the Lute; whenever he played, his two cranes would start dancing' 林和靖喜琴, 每一鼓則二鶴起舞. And the same source says about Yeh Mêng-tê (葉夢得, style: Shao-yün 少蘊, 1077-1148): 'Yeh Mêng-tê loved the Lute, he would play for a whole day without resting, the tones of the Lute mingling with the sounds of a brook. Later Yeh returned to mount Lu and sang songs, accompanying himself on his Lute. On one occasion there suddenly appeared a pair of cranes that gamboled

5) I may remark in passing that this tale contains some interesting data regarding the history of Lute music. It appears that as early as the Vth century B.C. there existed some system for noting down Lute music; for our text says explicitly that Master Chüan 'wrote down' *hsieh* 寫, the ghostly tune he heard. His method of recording the tune is not different from that used by present day Lute players: first the melody in general is noted down, but then several more hearings are necessary to record the exact timbre of the tones, and to add the various 'graces'. Then the tune should be played through many times (*hsi* 習), for only when the music has been memorized can the player in his performance do full justice to it. The terms *i-tsou* 一奏 and *tsai-tsou* 再奏 are not very clear; I follow Chavannes' translation.



about and danced in his garden. Yeh kept them, and they did not go away, but started to dance every time he played' 葉少蘊素好琴、終日不倦、泉聲與琴聲相亂、後歸廬山、倚琴而歌、忽見二鶴翩跹飛舞庭中、少蘊即蓄之、不去、每一鼓未嘗不起舞。

Several Lute tunes sing the excellent qualities of the crane. The *Pu-hsü-t'ang-ch'in-pu* (步虛堂琴譜, cf. Appendix II, no. 11) contains one tune that describes the crane in the scholar's garden; it bears the title 'Song of a pair of cranes listening to the babbling of a brook' 雙鶴聽泉吟. Another tune celebrates the soaring flight of the crane: 'Cranes dancing in the sky' 鶴舞洞天. The *T'ien-wên-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng* (cf. Appendix II, no. 17) has a tune entitled 'A pair of cranes bathing in a brook' 雙鶴沐泉. The introductory note added to this tune is not without interest for our subject. 'Late in spring I visited a friend in Kuan-k'ou (Szechuan Province). A pair of cranes were dancing in a clear rivulet. I observed their feathers white as snow, and the top of their heads red like vermilion. They fluttered up and down, and took their bath while dancing. Then they spread their wings and flew high up in the sky, and cried in harmony in the azure vault, making me doubt whether they were not Immortals. Then I drew my Lute unto me, and composed<sup>6)</sup> this tune' 暮春之初、訪友灌口、雙鶴沐於清泉、則見白翰欺雪、丹頂凝珠、以韻以頌、旋舞旋浴、既而奮翮於霄漢之間、和鳴於蒼冥之際、意殆其仙歟、因援琴而作是操。The Ming handbook *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (神奇秘譜, cf. Appendix II, no. 10) has a tune entitled 'Cranes crying in the marshes' (鶴鳴九皋, cf. the *Shih-ching* quotation cited above). The second half of the introductory remark says: 'The crane is a sacred bird. Its cries are most clear, they are heard at a distance of more than 8 miles. The meaning of this tune is to compare the tones of the Lute with the cries of the crane. I kept two cranes in the bamboo grove surrounding my Lute Hall. Sometimes, on a shadowy place, they would dance together, other times they would fly up and cry in unison. But they would always wait for the appropriate time: they did not dance unless there was a cool breeze to shake their feathers, and they did not cry unless they could look up to the Milky Way as if they saw the gods. When the time was not propitious they would neither sing nor dance. Recognizing the spiritual qualities of these cranes, I composed this tune' 鶴爲仙靈之禽、其鳴亮亮聞八九里、此曲之義蓋以鶴鳴喻琴聲焉、予嘗畜二鶴於琴院竹林之間、或離影而對舞、或雙飛而交鳴、必有時焉、其舞也感涼風則舞、以振其羽、仰見霄漢如有神物則鳴、非時則不鳴、非時則不舞、故知其鶴之靈而有是操、

6) This statement is not agreeable to truth: when playing this tune, one soon discovers that it is nothing but a variation on the tune 'Song of a pair of cranes listening to the babbling of a brook' of the Ming handbook mentioned above.



Various books give directions as to the proper way of rearing cranes and of recognizing birds of superior qualities. The qualities and outer marks of good cranes are described in the *Hsiang-ho-ching* 相鶴經; this book, though of doubtful authenticity, seems fairly old, and is found in many *ts'ung-shu*. Especially Ming treatises abound in discussions on the keeping and rearing of cranes, and on how to make them dance: one may train them to dance when one claps the hands. Consult the *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* (Appendix II, no. 4), ch. 15 p. 80 sq., and the *K'ao-pan-yü-shih* (Appendix II, no. 3), ch. 3. Interesting is the article on the rearing of cranes in ch. 6 of the *Hua-ching* 花鏡, a charming small book on the cultivation of trees and flowers, publ. in 1688 by Ch'ên Fu-yao 陳扶搖;<sup>7)</sup> he says that from the thigh bone of a crane excellent flutes can be made: their sound is clear, and in harmony with the sonorous tubes 又鶴腿骨爲笛、聲甚清越、音律更準。

Finally I may quote a remark on the crane found in the *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien*: 'While staying in a country house in an empty wood, how could one do one single day without the company of this refined friend, that makes one forget all worldly things?' 空林別墅、何可一日無此忘機清友。

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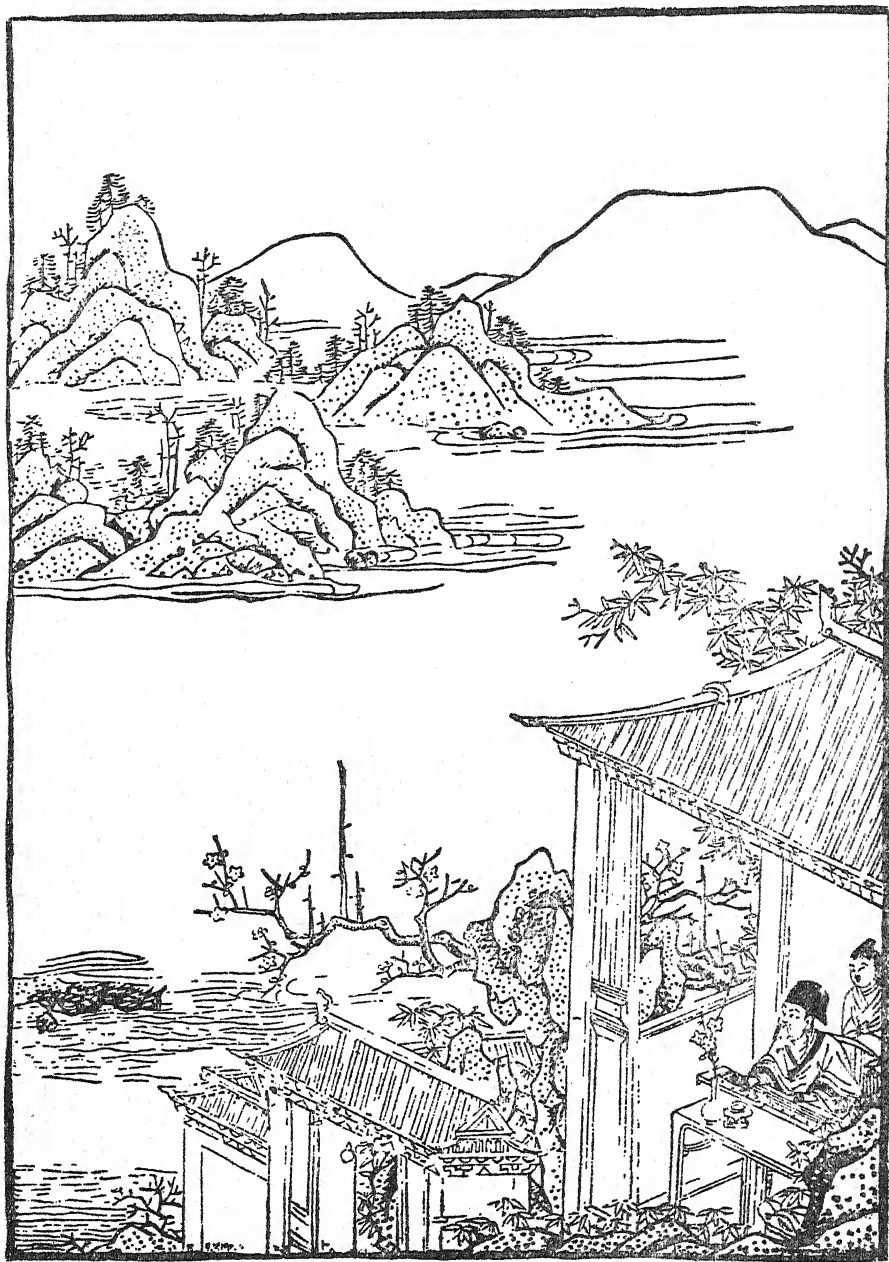
7) About Ch'ên Fu-yao I could find no further details; doubtless it is the same person as mentioned by Chavannes in connection with the handbook for painters, the *Chieh-tzu-yüan-hua-chuan* (cf. *Journal Asiatique*, March-April 1918, p. 329). The *Hua-ching* was in 1773 reprinted in Japan, at Kyôto, in 6 vols. The Chinese original has been provided throughout with Japanese reading marks, and the pictures have been reproduced with much care. The Japanese editor of the text was a certain Hiraga 平賀.



## 2. LUTE AND PLUM TREE, LUTE AND PINE TREE

Plum blossom and pine tree a favourite subject of Chinese artists  
—The Plum blossom: its connection with woman and sexual life—  
Plum blossom and Lute player—The pine tree: and old symbol for  
long life.

Chinese poets and painters have never tired of the delicate beauty of the plum blossom, and the robust grace of the gnarled pine tree. Poets celebrate the subtle colour and subdued fragrance of the plum blossom, and they admire the intriguing contrast of the tender flowers and the crooked and rough branches of the tree. And for more than a thousand years painters have chosen as their subject an old pine tree, standing lonely among steep rocks. The ideal of the Lute player is to possess a little out-house somewhere in the mountains, surrounded by a grove of prunes. When there is a light breeze, the falling plum blossoms shall suggest to



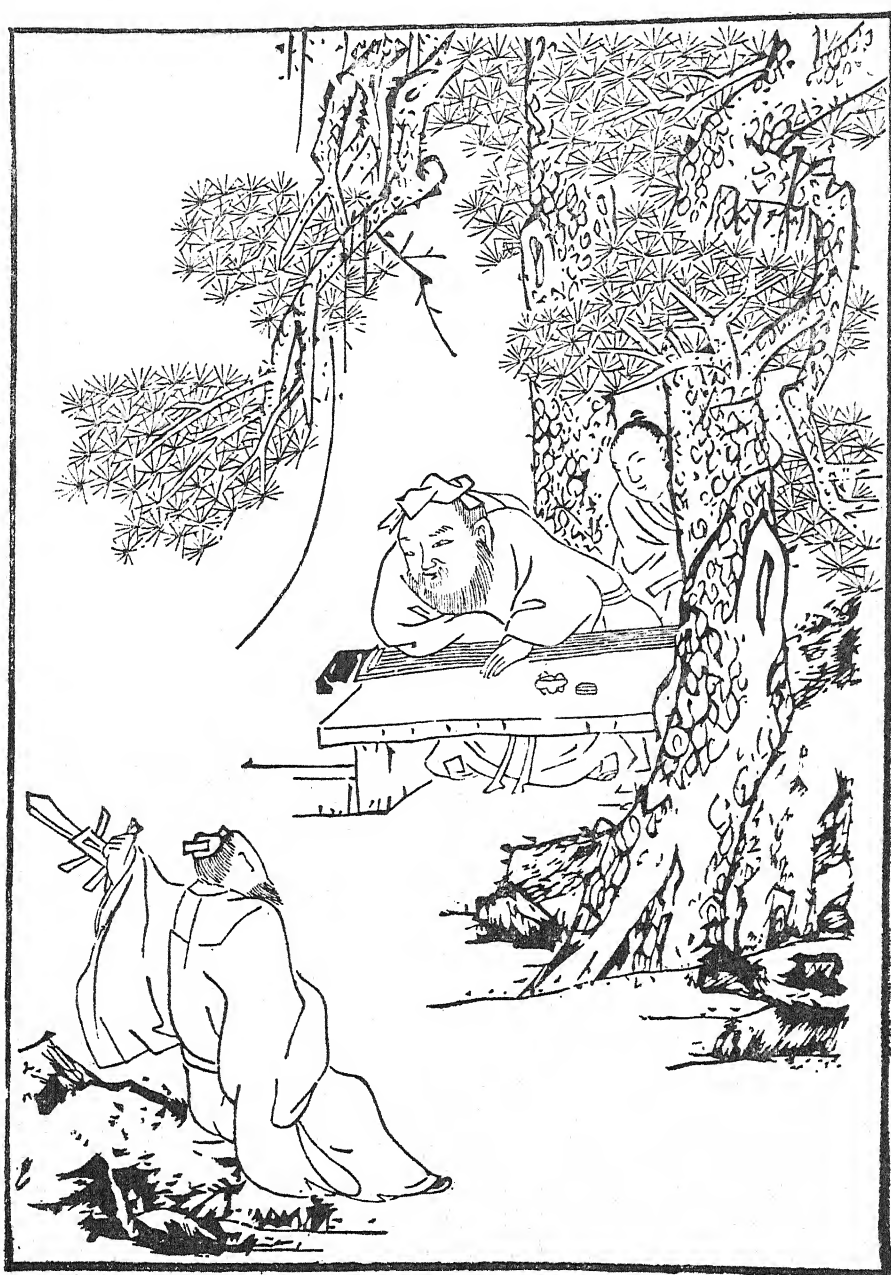
XVI A scholar playing the Lute before beautiful scenery. Note the vase with plum blossoms, and the incense burner on the Lute table. From a rare illustrated Ming print, the *T'ang-shih-hua-pu* 唐詩畫譜.

him the spirit of the more delicate touches of the finger technique. But if he can not afford that, when the right season has arrived he will take a flowering branch of the plum tree, and place it in a vase on his desk (see figure XVI). If one can have a house where some hoary pines guard the gate, they will lend dignity and style to one's mansion. And contemplating their antique appearance, the scholar shall recognize once more the antique atmosphere that hovers about the Lute and its lore. But the appreciation of the stern beauty of the pine tree is not only a privilege of the rich: the poor recluse may derive enjoyment from growing a dwarf pine tree in a flat basin.

A study of the origin and subsequent evolution of the Chinese love for plum tree and pine (together with the bamboo) would fill a bulky volume. Below only a few of the most striking features are outlined.

When one observes the place occupied by the plum tree in Chinese culture, it will be clear that here, just as with the crane, magical conceptions play an important role. The plum tree is closely associated with creative power and fertility. Because of the fact that the black and seemingly lifeless branches of an old plum tree still produce tender blossoms, the Chinese ascribe to this tree an unusual amount of Yang power, of vital energy, and have made it a symbol of longevity. Blossoming when winter has barely ended, it is a symbol of the New Year, and the revival of nature. Because of this and other associations, the plum tree and plum blossom are often used in metaphors relating to woman and female beauty. A slender waist is compared to the twig of a plum tree, a beautiful woman is called a plum blossom, a rose-and-white face is called a plum blossom complexion. In Chinese literature one often reads stories of plum blossoms that took the shape of beautiful girls. Well known is the charming story told in the *Lung-ch'êng-lu* (龍城錄, ascribed to the T'ang poet Liu Tsung-yüan, 773-819), 7th heading: during the K'ai-huang period (581-603) a certain Chao Shih-hsiung fell asleep when resting in a grove. He saw a beautiful girl in simple white attire, but surrounded by a subtle fragrance. Her attendant was a little boy clad in green. Chao talked and laughed with this girl till dawn. When he awoke, he discovered that he had been sleeping under a plum tree. It was in full bloom, and small green birds were twittering on its branches. As in many other countries, also in China the plum has sexual associations. *Mei-tu* 梅毒 'plum poison' (Jap. *baidoku*) in both China and Japan is a usual word for venereal disease, *lo-mei* 落梅 'falling of the plum blossoms' may be used as a metaphor for defloration, and the word *mei* itself frequently occurs, both in China and Japan, in the names of houses of ill repute.





XVII Playing the Lute in the shadow of pine trees. The man on the left is tuning a four-stringed guitar.  
Same source as XVI.

Next to its beauty, it is also this connection with the generative forces of nature, that assured the plum tree its established place among the constant companions of the scholar.

Just like the crane, the plum blossom is said to be sensitive to the beauty of Lute music. The *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* (cf. Appendix II, no. 6) tells the following story. "Wang Tzû-liang obtained a Lute of very antique appearance. Every time he played it, there would suddenly blow a gentle breeze, that made the plum blossoms in his garden come down in a dancing movement. Tzû-liang said with a sigh: These blossoms not only understand words, they also understand music." 王子良得一琴、質色甚古、每一鼓清風忽發、庭中梅花飛動、子良嘆曰、此花不獨解語、更能知音。

Therefore playing the Lute before plum blossoms is especially recommended; as an old poem says: 'Take your Lute with you and play before an old plum tree' 携琴合向古梅彈. In prose and poetry the plum tree and its blossoms are repeatedly mentioned in connection with the Lute, and in the technical terminology of the Lute the plum blossom often appears: a certain touch of the finger technique is compared to plum blossoms floating on the waves, and a type of bursts in the varnish of antique Lutes is called Plum Blossom cracks, *Mei-hua-tuan-wên* 梅花斷文.

As to the pine tree as an old symbol of longevity, its associations are so well known that after the remarks made above (Chapter III, section 3), there is no need to add much more. Also the pine tree is credited with a great amount of vital energy: it remains green through winter, and old, gnarled pines suggest a vigorous advanced age. That nearly all its parts figure largely in the Chinese *materia medica*, must chiefly be explained by sympathetic magic. In the foregoing pages we have seen that the pine tree is constantly mentioned in connection with the Lute: if the Lute player is not represented as sitting in a plum grove, he will be seated on a moss-covered stone under a couple of spreading pines.



### 3. LUTE AND SWORD

The sword maintained as attribute of the scholar because of its magic properties—The sword wards off evil forces, and is a container of vital energy—Evidence from Chinese popular religion—Stories about the magical properties of the sword in older literature—Lute and sword mentioned together as companions of the scholar.

The sword, symbol of military valour, was not much in favour with the literati, who, as a rule, considered all warlike pursuits as unbecoming

to their dignity. Beginning with about the early years of the Ming period, literary sources have not much to say in praise of this weapon. Yet a sword belongs to the outfit of a scholar, and it will be seen in his library, hanging on the wall side by side with the Lute. This seeming contradiction is explained when the older associations of the sword are taken into consideration.

Despite its warlike character, the sword maintained its place among the attributes of the scholar because of magical considerations: the sword is a powerful defense against the forces of darkness. The belief that cutting instruments scare away ghosts and demons, is, of course, spread over the whole world. In China we find that in olden times the sword belonged to the outfit of the Taoist devil-banner. Already in the writings of the Taoist writer T'ao Hung-ching (陶弘景, 452-536) we find the statement: 'All who wish to study Taoist magic must possess a good sword, that should never leave their side' 凡學道術者皆須有好劍隨身. Old treatises on the sword, like the *Tao-chien-lu* 刀劍錄 (by T'ao Hung-ching, mentioned above), the *Chien-chi* 劍記 (by Kuo Tzû-chang 郭子章, 16th century) abound in stories about the magical properties of the sword: swords change into dragons, hidden swords betray their presence by supernatural phenomena, old swords may foretell the future, etc. Popular religion shows many traces of these beliefs in the magic power of the sword. Two swords buried under the threshold shall keep away robbers (cf. H. Doré, *Manuel des superstitions chinoises*, Shanghai 1926, p. 91); swords made of cash strung together will keep evil forces away, etc. An interesting survival is the Chinese custom of placing a big knife on the dead body in a coffin (cf. Doré, op. cit. p. 51). Nowadays it is explained as a means of preventing the ghost of the deceased from haunting the house. But it seems probable that this custom originated in the old rite of burying swords with the dead. For also the sword is considered as a container of Yang power, and as such the sword as burial gift must have had the same significance of the jade as burial gift, viz. to preserve the corpse from decay.

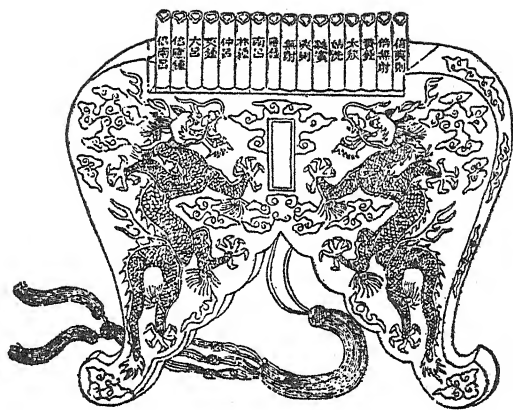
The traditional attitude of the later scholar to the sword as belonging to the library of the literatus is shown in the following passage from the *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* (cf. Appendix II, no. 4). It is the second half of a section entitled *Ch'in-chien* 琴劍 'Sword and Lute.' 'Since olden times the methods for making all sorts of things have been transmitted, only the art of casting swords is not recorded in literary sources. That is why nowadays there are no more knights errant, and few famous swords exist; this is because the tradition of swordsmanship has been broken off. Moreover it is easier to handle a dagger than a sword, therefore now people,



though knowing how to carry daggers, do not know how to carry a sword. As for me, although I do not use the sword for guarding against the violent and opposing the strong, I yet employ it for fortifying my mind and strengthening my spirit. If one can not obtain an old sword, then a good modern sword, like those manufactured in Yünnan, will do for being hung in the library. 自古各物之製莫不有法傳流、獨鑄劍之術、不載典籍、故今無劍客、而世少名劍、以劍術無傳、且刀便於劍、所以人知佩刀而不知佩劍也、吾輩設此、總不能用以禦暴敵強、亦可壯懷志勇、不得古劍、即今之寶劍如雲南製者、懸之高齋。 The author winds up by praising in a wealth of literary allusions the brilliant lustre of the sword, which outshines the stars.

The cultured scholar will prefer for his library a beautiful, antique sword, with a finely decorated scabbard, and covered with old inscriptions. But often an ordinary sword or dagger is used.

Of the copious references in literature to Lute and sword together, I only quote one, the first couplet of the introductory poem to the famous 'roman de mœurs', *Chin-p'ing-mei* 金瓶梅, which says: 'Opulence and glamour have gone, and the guests have stopped coming. Flutes and cithers are silent. Song and chant are no more heard. The heroic sword has lost its grimness, its beautiful shine has become dull. The precious Lute has fallen asunder, and its brilliant studs are lost'. (*chin-hsing* is a literary expression for *hui* 徽; neither F. Kuhn or O. Kibat in their translations of the novel has realized this, and they both render *chin-hsing* wrongly as 'Brilliant star') 豪華去後行人絕、簫箏不響歌喉咽、雄劍無威光彩沉、寶琴零落金星滅。



#### 4. SOME FAMOUS STORIES AND MUCH-QUOTED PASSAGES RELATING TO THE LUTE

The 22 stories and passages translated below, are all taken from the *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* (cf. Appendix II, No. 6), and the *T'ien-wên-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng* (cf. Appendix II, no. 17). In many cases it would have been possible to trace the story to its original source, where often the text is more complete. But for our purpose it seemed better to give them in the form in which they occur in books on the Lute, for then it will appear which particular points especially appealed to the Lute masters. The stories need no commentary: they speak for themselves. And each of them may serve, in its own way, as illustration of some of the aspects of *ch'in* ideology discussed in the foregoing chapters.

1. Ou-yang Hsiu (the famous Sung literatus, 1007-1072) used to say: 'I have assembled one thousand rolls with old records; of books I have collected

ten thousand volumes ; further I possess one Lute, one set of chess, and usually thereto is added one pot of wine. Amidst these things I grow old, being as it were one of a company of six.' On account of this he chose as his literary name : the Retired Scholar One-of-six.

He also said : ' I used to suffer from fits of melancholy, and a leisurely life could not cure them. Then I studied the Lute under the guidance of my friend Sun Tao-tzû, who taught me a couple of tunes in the Kung mode. I found enjoyment in these during a long time, and did not know that I harboured such a thing as melancholy.'

歐陽修言、吾集古錄一千卷、藏書一萬卷、有琴一張、棋一局、而嘗置酒一壺、吾老於其間、是爲六一、遂號六一居士。

又曰、吾嘗有幽憂之疾、而間居不能治也、既而學琴于友人孫道滋、受宮聲數引、久而樂之、不知疾之在其體也。

2. Ch'ao Pi (T'ang period) used to play a five-stringed Lute. When people asked the reason for this, he replied : ' First I strove to understand the meaning of these five strings with my mind ; the second stage was that my soul sensed their significance. Finally I played them quite naturally, not knowing whether the five strings were I, or I the five strings.'

趙璧彈五絃琴、人間其故、曰、吾之五絃也、始則心驅之、中則神遇之、終則天隨之、不知五絃之爲璧、璧之爲五絃也。

3. Chang Hung-ching had an old Lute. The shine of its varnish was entirely gone, and its colour was jet black. He had given it the name of ' Falling flowers and flowing water.' One night he heard a rat make a loud noise. Fearing that it might gnaw his Lute or his books, he ordered a maid servant to make light. Then he saw that one string of his Lute had broken, (and was hanging down), having strangled a rat. Chang Hung-ching was amazed at this, and changed the name of his Lute to : ' Terror of the Rats.'

張弘靜有古琴、漆光盡退、色如墨石、銘曰、落花流水、一夕聞鼠聲甚急、懼啮琴書、命婢以火燭之、見有斷絃、繫得一鼠、弘靜異之、改名曰鼠畏。

4. Chang Chi, style Chung-ching, a man from Nan-yang, was very skilled in healing illness. One day he entered a cedar wood, looking for medicinal herbs. There he met a sick man, who asked for a consultation. (Having examined him), Chang Chi said : How is it that you have the pulse of an animal ? Then the man told him the truth, viz. that in reality he was an old monkey living in a cave on mount I. Chang Chi took from his bag some pills, and gave him one. Having taken this, the monkey was cured immediately. The next day this monkey came again in his human form, bearing on his shoulder an enormous log. He said : This is a cedar ten thousand years old. I offer it as a slight requital. From this beam Chang Chi made two Lutes. One he called Old Monkey, the other Ten thousand Years.

張機、字仲景、南陽人、精於治療、一日入桐栢、覓藥草、遇一病人求診、仲景曰、子之腕有獸脈、何也、其人以實告、乃嶧山穴中老猿也、仲景出囊中丸藥界之一、服輒愈、明日其人肩一巨木至、曰、此萬年桐也、聊以相報、仲景斲爲二琴、一曰古猿、一曰萬年。

5. Silk worms are very clever ; when they spin themselves into cocoons, they often take the shape of the things they come in contact with.

Once there was a young widow. Spending the night alone, resting on her pillow, she could not sleep. In the wall near her there was a hole, and through this she looked at the silkworms of her neighbour, who were just leaving

their frames. Next day the cocoons all showed a resemblance with her face. Although one could not clearly distinguish eyebrows and eyes, still when seen from some distance they closely resembled the face of a sad girl. Ts'ai Yung, the famous scholar, saw these cocoons, and bought them for a high price. He reeled off the silk threads, and from it made strings for his Lute. When he played, however, their sound appeared to be sad and melancholy. When he asked his daughter Yen about it, she said: "This is widow's silk. When listening to its sounds one cannot but weep."

蠶最巧、作繭往往遇物成形、有寡女獨宿、倚枕不寐、私傍壁孔中、視鄰蠶離箔。明日繭都類之、雖眉目不甚悉、而望去隱然似愁女、蔡邕見之、厚價市歸、縑絲製琴絃、彈之有憂愁哀慟之聲、問女孩、琰曰、此寡女絲也、聞者莫不墮淚。

6. During the Chou dynasty master Ching served in the State of Wei. He excelled in playing the Lute. Prince Wên (426-387) was enthusiastic about it, and began to dance. Ching became angry, and struck the Prince with his Lute. Then the Prince got angry, and ordered Ching to be dragged out of the Palace and killed. Ching said: "I beg leave to say one thing before I die." The Prince said: "What is it?" Ching said: "I have struck a prince like the tyrants Chieh and Chou, and not a wise ruler like Yao and Shun." Prince Wên said "I have been wrong," and let him go free. But the Lute he suspended on the wall, as a reminder.

周師經仕魏、善鼓琴、文侯耽之、起舞、經怒、以琴撞文侯、文侯怒、使人曳下殿、將殺之、經曰、乞申一言而死、文侯曰、何、經曰、臣撞桀紂之君、不撞堯舜之主、文侯曰、寡人過矣、乃捨之、懸琴於壁以爲戒。

7. Wei Yeh, style: Chung-hsien, (960-1019, well known poet of the Sung period; his collected works, the *Ts'ao-t'ang-chi* 草堂集 are still preserved) naturally loved songs and chants, and did not strive after worldly fame. He lived in the eastern suburb of the town, where with his own hands he planted bamboos and trees. His abode was surrounded by a flowing water, and breathed an atmosphere of great profundity. There he dug out a cave of one fathom square, and called it 'Cave where harmony with Heaven is enjoyed'. In front of this he made a hut of grass, and there played his Lute. When people visited him there, irrespective of whether they were of high or low standing, he would receive them in white clothes and a cap of black gauze. He took the literary name of 'Retired Scholar of the Grass Hut'. He played the Lute and composed poetry, and therein found full satisfaction. When the Emperor T'ai-tsung of the Sung dynasty sacrificed at Fên-yin, he summoned Wei Yeh, but Wei Yeh did not go, giving illness as an excuse. One day, when he was busy teaching cranes to dance, he was informed that Imperial messengers had arrived. Then he took his Lute in his arms, lept over the fence and fled.

魏野字仲先、性嗜吟咏、不求聞達、居州之東郊、手植竹木、流泉環繞、境趣幽絕、鑿土袤丈、曰、樂天洞、前爲草堂、彈琴其中、人訪之者、無貴賤皆白衣紗帽見之、號草堂居士、彈琴賦詩以自適、宋太宗祀汾陰、召之、辭疾不至、一日方教鶴舞、報中使至、抱琴踰垣而走。

8. In the time of the Emperor Hsiao-wên (B.C. 250) there was found a musician of Prince Wên of Wei (426-387 B.C.), called Pao-kung, who was 180 years old. He used to say about himself that at the age of 12 he became blind, and that his parents then taught him the Lute. He excelled in playing accomplished music, and did not lose his great skill, in spite of his high age. Thus

Pao-kung since his youth played the Lute for more than 160 years, and during all that time he never once knew what a Lute looked like.

孝文時，得魏文侯樂工寶公，年一百八十矣。自言十三歲失明。父母教之琴，能為雅聲，能老不廢忘，然則寶公自少，鼓琴一百六十餘年，而平生未嘗識琴之形也。

9. Sun Fêng had a Lute, which was called 'Turkey-cock.' When played, its tones were not very beautiful. Only when some one sang, then the strings of their own accord would accompany it. So Sun changed its name to 'Singing by itself.' On its bottom board there was a hole the shape of which resembled that of a moth. One day there came along a Taoist monk, begging for food. On seeing this Lute, he said: 'Inside there is a moth. If it is not driven away, the Lute will soon be worm-eaten.' Thereupon he took from his sleeve a small bamboo tube, and from it poured out a black medicine near the hole. No sooner had he done so than a green insect came running out. On its back it had a pattern of fine golden threads. The Taoist monk caught it and put it in the bamboo tube, then went his way. Thereafter, when a song was sung, the Lute did not respond to it any more. Sun Fêng was amazed at this. When he told a sage of wide knowledge of this occurrence, the wise man said with a sigh: 'This (insect) was a rare treasure, called Chü-t'ung. When it is put next to the ear of a deaf man, he will be immediately cured. It likes to eat cedar wood, but it likes especially old ink.' Only then did Sung Fêng realize that the black medicine which the monk kept in the bamboo tube was nothing but dregs of old ink.

孫鳳有一琴，名吐綬。彈之不佳，獨有人唱曲，則琴絃自相屬和，因改名曰自鳴。但琴背有一孔若蛙者，一日有一道人乞食，因見曰，此中有蛙，不除之，則將速朽，袖中出一小竹筒，倒黑藥少許孔側，即有綠色蟲走出，背上隱隱有金線文，道人納蟲竹筒中，竟去，自後唱曲，絃不復鳴矣，鳳怪之，有博物君子說及此事，歎曰，此異寶也，謂之蠅通，有耳聾人置耳邊少時，即愈，喜食梧桐，尤愛古墨，鳳始悟道人竹筒中藥，蓋古墨屑也。

10. Ch'ên Chih loved the Lute, and would play on it day and night without stopping. When he had done so for twenty-eight years, suddenly a purple flower blossomed forth from the Lute. He ate it, and disappeared as an Immortal.

陳植好鼓琴，晝夜不輟，凡二十八年，忽見琴生紫花，食之即仙去。

11. Wang Ching-po was a man from Kuei-chi. His Lute was called 'Influencing Ghosts.' Once he passed the night in a pavilion, on an islet near his town. That night there was a brilliant moon, and a light dew was settling down. By playing his Lute he compelled the ghost of the dead daughter of Liu Hui-ming to come to him. She looked just as if she were alive, and two maids accompanied her.

王敬伯會稽之人，琴曰，感靈，一日洲渚中昇亭而宿，是夜月華露輕，敬伯鼓琴，感劉惠明亡女之靈告敬伯，就體如平生，從婢二人。

12. Hsi K'ang (famous Lute player, 223-262) one evening was playing his Lute, when suddenly a ghost appeared, wearing chains and sighing deeply. Lifting up his hands in supplication, the ghost said: 'Let me play a tune for you.' Hsi K'ang then gave him his Lute, and he played; the tones were clear but uncanny. When questioned, the ghost did not answer. Hsi K'ang thought it might have been the ghost of Ts'ai Yung (the famous musician and statesman, 133-192), for he had died in fetters.

嵇中散夜彈琴，忽見一鬼，械而長嘆，舉其手袂曰，為君一調，中散與琴彈之，聲清冷遙，問不對，疑是蔡邕，邕死之日，身著絳袴。



13. Another evening when Hsi K'ang was playing the Lute, there suddenly appeared a man more than ten feet tall, clad in black cloth and leather belt. When Hsi K'ang had given him a good look, he extinguished his lamp, saying: 'I would not venture to emulate the light of a goblin.'

嵇康燈下鼓琴，忽有一人長丈餘，着黑單衣革帶，康熟視之，乃滅燈曰，耻與魑魅爭光

14. In the beginning of the Shao-hsing period (1131-1162) Shêng Hsün was prefect of Hsiang-yang. He made himself a pavilion built over a stream, and there daily played his Lute. One day a stormwind arose, and rain poured down. His Lute changed into a huge red carp, and riding on it Shêng Hsün disappeared into the sky.

紹興初盛勛知襄陽，自造水閣，日鼓琴于此，一日風雨大作，琴化為巨赤鯉，勛跨之騰空而去。

15. Ch'ên Ch'iu-yang fell ill and died. His father thought much of him, and placed his son's Lute before his soul tablet. Always after that in the middle of the night the tones of this Lute would be heard; they could be heard even outside the house.

陳秋陽以病卒，其父思之，以琴置靈几，每夜半必聞琴聲，且達戶外。

16. Chuang An-hsiang was once playing the Lute when it was dark. At once close by the fingers of her right hand there appeared a golden flower, which filled the whole room with its shine. In remembrance of this occurrence, she composed the tune called 'Golden Flower.'

莊暗香暗中彈琴，右手指有金花，照爛九案，因自作金花之曲。

17. In the beginning of the T'ien-pao period (550-559) Li Chia-yin was a great lover of the Lute; he would never stop playing, whether it was summer or winter. By the side of his seat there grew up five-coloured agarics (symbol of longevity), all showing the shapes of Immortals.

天保初，李嘉胤素好鼓琴，冬夏不輟，所居座中生五色芝草，皆狀如神仙。

18. Tai K'uei (literatus of the Chin period, died 396; next to being a famous Lute player, he was also known as a fine calligraphist and painter) in his youth already excelled in all arts, and was good at playing the Lute. His Lute was called 'Black Crane'. The Prime Minister, Prince Hsi of Wu-ling, despatched some people to invite him to come to his court. Tai K'uei then broke his Lute to pieces before the eyes of the messengers, saying: 'Tai K'uei can not become a payed comedian at a prince's court.'

戴逵少有文藝，善鼓琴，琴名黑鶴，太宰武陵王晞使人召焉，逵對使者前打破琴曰，戴安道不能為王門之伶人。

The same story is quoted in the *Ku-ch'in-shu* (古琴疏, ascribed to Yü Ju-ming 虞汝明, cf. the *Shuo-fu* 說郛); there the behaviour of Tai K'uei is contrasted with that of another famous Lute player of the same period, Yüan Chan (阮瞻, style Ch'ien-li 千里). 'Yüan Chan was an expert on the Lute. People heard of his fame, and came in great numbers, asking him to play for them. He played for all, noble and low, young and old. I consider the understanding shown by Yüan Chan superior to the consistency of Tai K'uei.'

阮千里善彈琴，人聞其名往來求聽，不問貴賤長幼，皆為彈之，余以為安道之介，不如千里之達。

19. During the Chên-yüan period (785-804) Ts'ui Hui, having lost his way, fell into a dry well. At the bottom he found a cave. Having penetrated into this cave for several miles, he struck a stone door, and having entered it

he found a room, measuring more than a hundred feet. The walls were beset with jewels, the glamour of which illuminated the whole room. A Lute was lying on a table. Ts'ui Hui observed all this, without understanding where he was. After some delay he started playing on the Lute. Then suddenly a door in the backwall opened, and in came two girls, saying: 'How is it that Master Ts'ui makes bold to enter the serail of the Emperor?' Ts'ui Hui asked: 'Where is the Emperor?' They answered: 'He has gone to the banquet of Chu Yung (a personage of the mythical age, later revered as Fire God; the implication is that Ts'ui Hui had entered the palace of one of the mythical Emperors). Thereupon the girls told him to be seated before the table, and play on the Lute for them. Ts'ui Hui played the tune Hu-chia (cf. above, chapter IV: 'The significance of the tunes, under heading 2, where the origin of the tune is differently explained). The girls asked: 'What tune is this?' He answered: 'It is called Hu-chia'. They asked further: 'Why is it called Hu-chia?' He said: 'The daughter of Ts'ai Yung of the Han dynasty was carried off by the barbarians as a prisoner. Being in their midst she was moved, remembering her former life, and taking her Lute she composed this tune, representing the mournful sounds of the barbarians blowing their reed pipe'. The girls were overjoyed, and exclaimed: 'What a beautiful new tune this is!' Thereupon they made him call toasts with them.

貞元中，崔煒因迷道失足，墜一枯井中，井中空洞，傍行數里，觸一石門，入門一室，可百餘步，壁綴明珠，光亮一室，几上設琴，煒細視莫測，良久取琴試彈，室後一戶，忽啓有二女，出曰，何崔生擅入皇帝玄宮耶，煒問，皇帝何在，曰，暫赴祝融宴耳，因命煒就榻鼓琴，煒彈胡笳，二女曰，何曲也，曰，胡笳也，曰，何以爲胡笳，煒曰，漢蔡邕女，被虜入胡中，及歸感胡中故事，因撫琴而成斯弄，象胡中吹笳哀咽之聲，女皆怆然，曰，大是新曲，遂命酌傳觴。

20. On a moonlit night Su Shih (the famous Sung literatus, 1036-1101) heard outside his window a song. It sang: "Tones, tones . . . You are ungrateful, truly you are ungrateful! You have treated me badly, up to this day. I remember that formerly I used to sing softly, softly, drinking small cups. One tune of mine was then deemed worth a thousand pieces of gold. Now I am thrown away at the base of an old wall . . . The autumnal breeze blows over the dry grass, the white clouds are high . . . The bridge is broken, the water flows on, and my lover is nowhere to be seen. Sadness, sadness, melancholy . . ." Opening the window to trace this sound, Su Shih saw a slender young woman, who vanished under the wall. The next day he dug there, and found an old Lute.

蘇東坡於月夜開窗外歌曰，音音音，你負心、真負心，辜負我，到於今，記得當時低低唱，淺淺斟，一曲值千金，如今拋我古牆陰，秋風荒草白雲深，斷橋流水無故人，淒淒切切，冷冷清清，推窗卽之，見一女子冉冉沒於牆下，明日掘之，得古琴一張。

(To the words of the girl's song, there was made a minor Lute tune, entitled *Ku-ch'in-yin* 古琴吟 'Lament of the old Lute'; G. Soulié, cf. Appendix I, no. 3, has given on p. 116 a transcription of this tune in western notation. His translation of the words on p. 115 is full of mistakes, and should be disregarded.)

21. Wang Yen-po was playing his Lute in a house-boat that was lying ashore for the night. Then he saw a girl, who drew aside the door curtain, and entered. She took the Lute and started to tune it; the tones were very sad. When Wang asked her what tune she was going to play, she answered: 'It is called Ch'u-ming-kuang; only Hsi K'ang (see above) can play it'. Wang asked her to teach it to him, but she said: 'This is not a tune that may be played at a lover's meet-

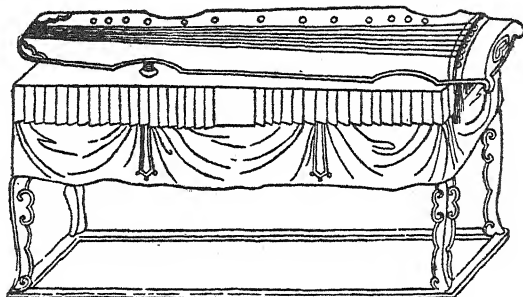
ing. It is only intended for the enjoyment of recluses living on high rocks or in hidden vales.' Then she played the Lute and sang thereto. She shared his couch with him, and disappeared at daybreak.

王彥伯維舟理琴、見一女子披帷而進、取琴調之、聲甚哀、彥伯問何曲、答曰、此楚明光也、唯嵇叔夜能之、彥伯請受、女曰、此非龔俗所宜、唯岩棲谷隱者可以自娛耳、鼓琴且歌、止於東榻、遲明辭去。

22. Yüan Hsien (disciple of Confucius) lived in a little hut, his doorposts were mulberry trees, his clothes were made of coarse wool. The hut was leaking from above and damp underneath, but he sat there correctly, and played on an old Lute. (In the mean time) Tzû-kung (another disciple of Confucius) had become a minister in the state Wei, and he came to visit Yüan with a four-in-hand team and a suite of cavalry. When he saw Yüan Hsien he said: 'Alas! In what distress you are!' Yüan Hsien answered: 'I have heard that a man who has no riches is called poor, and that a man who has studied the Way but can not practise it, is called in distress. Now I for one am poor, but I am not in distress. In truth, doing things always looking for approval from the bystanders, being partial in choosing friends, loving a display of benevolence and righteousness, and showing off chariots and horses, these are things which I could not bear to do'. Tzû-kung hastily went away, and looked sour for the rest of his life.

原憲居環堵之室、桑以爲樞、褐以爲裳、上漏下溼、匡坐而彈古琴、子貢相衛、結駟連騎而來、見憲曰、嘻、先生何病也、憲應之曰、憲聞之無財謂之貧、學道而不能行、謂之病、若憲貧也、非病也、夫希而行、比周而友、仁義之隱、車馬之飾、憲不忍爲也、子貢逡巡而退、終身猶有慚色。

(Taken from the *K'ung-tzû-chia-yü* 孔子家語; the same story is to be found in a slightly different version in *Chuang-tzû*, book Jang-wang 讓王)



## CHAPTER THE SEVENTH

### CONCLUSIONS

Brief survey of the history of the Lute and its ideology—Earliest history, and development during subsequent periods—Great importance of the Ming period: greatest florescence of the study of the Lute—Gradual decline during the Ch'ing dynasty—Present state of the Lute, and future possibilities.

The Lute, the cither (*sé*), the reed-organ (*shéng*), and the quaint ocarina (*hsüan*), these are the instruments by which the ancient music of China can be studied. These instruments preserve tones that accompanied solemn sacrifices, notes that delighted the ears of ancient princes, more than three thousand years ago.

To revive this music, however, is no easy task. For the succeeding centuries have dimmed the tradition regarding the music of *sé*, *shéng* and *hsüan*: age has sealed their secrets. At present we find only some faint echos in their score for the ceremonial orchestra, stray fragments of what once must have been impressive solo music. It is only the Lute that has an unbroken tradition. It was on the Lute that many generations

of scholars concentrated their musical efforts, inspired by reverent love for this instrument of the ancient sages. And so it was the Lute that became a symbol of literary life and elegant refinement. At the same time it has retained its character of musical instrument, while *shêng*, *sé* and *hsüan* are more and more regarded as mere curiosities.

In the foregoing pages I have tried to describe one aspect of this unique Chinese musical instrument ; I have tried to give the reader some idea of the place occupied by the Lute in Chinese culture. I have tried to show how various, often originally conflicting elements, melted together and came to form a more or less unified ideology, the lore of the Chinese Lute. And at the same time I have endeavoured to outline some historical perspectives. On rereading the above, my historical observations especially appear to me rather haphazard, and too much scattered over different chapters. As the material treated is almost entirely new, these defects were often unavoidable. Too often I was obliged to abandon the course of an argument, and branch off on some side track, in order to substantiate my theories. For the reader's convenience I here sum up in a concise form the conclusions that may be drawn from the foregoing chapters.

The origin of the Lute lies hidden in China's past. There is evidence, however, that at some remote time, Lute and cither were one and the same instrument : a stringed instrument, about the form and sound of which we can only make conjectures. This primordial Lute must have borne an exclusively sacral character.

During the later part of the Chou dynasty, and until roughly the beginning of our era, we find Lute and cither as separate, though still cognate, instruments, both used in the ceremonial orchestra. At the same time both were also used as solo instruments, for executing music of lighter genre. Yet it appears that it was especially to the Lute that clung faint echoes of those ancient magical beliefs that were connected with old ceremonial music. This appears clearly from the story related in the *Shih-chi*, and given in section 1 of the preceding chapter : the Lute is played at a banquet to amuse the guests, but unexpectedly it becomes the instrument through which hidden powers, originating in magic ceremonies of the dim past, manifest themselves in sinister omens. Thus gradually the Lute is set more or less apart as a kind of sacred instrument. And when during the Later Han dynasty the Confucianist literati are established as a mighty official caste, they declare the Lute their special instrument. Here the ways of lute and cither part. The ancient magical notions that formerly were connected with music in general, are henceforth applied to one instrument in particular, the Lute. Many



of these notions are cast in Taoist formulae, these being by nature more suitable for that purpose than Confucianist terminology. Also Buddhism makes its influence felt, and thus we find in the IVth and Vth centuries A. D. that something like a special *ch'in* ideology has been founded. The ceremonial orchestra, too, under literary influence, has become an expression of politico-philosophical conceptions. But it is in the Lute ideology that the ancient magic conceptions survive: playing the Lute is described as a means for prolonging life, and as an aid to meditation.

During the Sui and T'ang periods an intense artistic impulse inspired Chinese culture. Mainly through Central Asiatic influence, the Chinese were obsessed by a hunger for bright and gorgeous colours, for highly melodious, light and entrancing music. New instruments were imported from foreign countries, and old Chinese instruments were put to a new use. The Lute, with its rich acoustic possibilities, is tuned to less severe melodies, and is incorporated in the orchestra for entertainment music, to enliven literary gatherings and festive banquets. But on the other hand, as a reaction, some conservative scholars now start to define more sharply the principles of the special ideology of the Lute, to guard their beloved instrument against the vulgarity of the crowd.

The Sung dynasty then shows both the profane and the sacred aspects of the Lute, and between these two aspects its music is almost evenly balanced. It is a period of gestation, a slow preparation for the great climax. This process of maturation goes on for some time, until, at length, during the Ming period Lute and Lute music reach full fruition. The great importance of this period for the Lute justifies a slightly more detailed treatment.

It is much to be regretted that it has become a habit of western writers, when describing the history of China, to pass over the Ming dynasty in a few words, or at best, with a few pages. They dwell on the political decay that set in with the predominance of the eunuchs in Palace circles and, speaking of the cultural aspect of the period, they say that no new artistic impulses of importance are noticeable, that in all branches of art and literature nothing was accomplished beyond copying old models. And with regard to scientific pursuits, they repeat the judgement given by the scholars of the Ch'ing dynasty, pronouncing Ming scholarship shallow and uncritical.

Now, that Ch'ing scholars did little to show the glory of the Ming dynasty is quite understandable. The hand of the Manchu conqueror rested heavily on the Chinese intellect, and to grow enthusiastic over the merits of the former dynasty was courting disaster. Less excusable is

the negligent attitude of western scholars. For they have free access to the vast mass of original Ming materials that is preserved. That they did not use this opportunity, shows that until very recently among western sinologues there existed a strong tendency to study only the approved sections of Chinese literature, books that were found in the Ch'ing catalogues. But in order to see the culture of the Ming period as it really was, we must entirely ignore Ch'ing materials ; they can only blur our view. We must turn to the original Ming materials, which, fortunately, still exist in abundance. Ming editions of the works of almost every Ming literatus of any importance have been preserved.<sup>8)</sup> Ming porcelain still tells its own tale, and genuine Ming paintings are by no means rare.

Surveying these materials I come to the conclusion that from a cultural point of view, the Ming period was one of the most glorious epochs in Chinese history. It was the period that saw a culmination of pure Chinese culture, the period that shows the most complete expression of Chinese ideals. The foreign influences that entered China during the T'ang and subsequent dynasties had been digested : in the Ming period a complete amalgamation is effected. During this period the Chinese spirit blossomed most luxuriantly ; it was during the Ch'ing dynasty that the withering set in. When a tree is in full blossom, its gorgeous beauty amazes the observer ; little does he care what the branches and the trunk look like. With the coming of autumn, the blossoms fall down, then the leaves, and the observer sees the tree in a more realistic way : he sees that here branches are broken, there a stem ends in an abrupt gnarl. The observer will know more, but enjoy less. This image may give an idea of the fundamental differences between the general spirit of Ming and Ch'ing cultures. Ming scholars wrote enthusiastic eulogies on a passage in the Classics that struck them as eminently wise ; Ch'ing scholars pointed out that the punctuation of one sentence was erroneous. Ming literati reprinted the poetry of the T'ang and preceding periods in magni-

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8) During the Ch'ing dynasty the censor often took entire chapters out of these Ming prints ; it is in Japan that one must look for un mutilated copies. For a great number of Ming editions were brought over to Japan shortly after their publication, and were carefully preserved. Such Ming editions are especially found in the collections of old feudal families. These books are called in the Japanese book trade *kowatari* 古渡り, and are greatly valued. Japan generally furnishes important materials for our knowledge of Ming culture. In the turbulent years that marked the end of the Ming dynasty, Chinese priests, scholars and artists fled to Japan in great numbers, and were patronized by Japanese nobles and scholars. So great was their influence, that for obtaining a right understanding of, say Tokugawa culture, a study of the Ming dynasty is imperative ; and, conversely, when studying the Ming period one cannot afford to disregard the mass of Ming material preserved in Japan.

ficent editions, with graceful characters on large-sized paper. Ch'ing scholars reprinted this same poetry in cheap looking editions, with small, angular characters, but with the text really improved.

During the Ming period the daily life of the scholar-official neared something like perfection. The literati of that time, mostly of an eclectic turn of mind, understood the secret of life, which consists of judiciously mixing beauty with comfort, and high ideals with purely practical views. This way of living is mirrored in the literature of the period. Numerous books are written on the refined pleasures of the cultured scholar. They describe in minute detail the art of tea drinking, the art of flower arrangement, of laying out gardens, of building rockeries, of playing chess and complicated wine games, of practising arrow throwing, ball games, and a multitude of other subjects that later were neglected, or fell entirely into oblivion.

It is only natural, therefore, that it was during the Ming period, too, that Lute and Lute music displayed their full and most sublime unfolding. In cultural centres all over the country great Lute masters arose, and numerous handbooks were published. Their composers did not aim at retracing the old music. Although they loved to dwell on the beauty of bygone days, this was a sentiment, a mood, but little conducive to intensive study. They composed very original and most attractive new tunes, to which they assigned the old approved titles. This music is new, but how rich in tone, what subtle effects, what fullness of musical expression! Granted that the Ming Lute players were mediocre students of musical history (with some brilliant exceptions like the Prince Tsai-yü), it can not be denied that they were gifted musicians.

In the circles of the literati, cultivating leisurely enjoyment and abstract contemplation, the various conceptions connected with the Lute were more or less systematized, and pressed into formulae. Since many of the literati engaged in Taoist disciplines for prolonging life, and interested themselves in the search for the elixir of life and similar pursuits, the magical character of the Lute was stressed more and more. Now the system of *ch'in* ideology reaches its full development, and the significance of the Lute is definitely fixed.

During the Ch'ing dynasty the life of the literati loses much of its glamour. Especially in the earlier part of the Ch'ing period, literary pursuits are postponed to military prowess: the most skilful brush is powerless when confronted with the swords and bows of the Manchu bannermen. Later, it is true, literary ideals reasserted themselves; but the vigour and élan of the Ming period were never regained. South

China was less affected. Up to the present it is still in South China that remnants of Ming culture must be looked for. Also it was the southern provinces that produced most of the great Lute masters of the Ch'ing period.

When the Manchu supremacy had become more firmly established, the rulers could devote more attention to literary matters. Then Ch'ing scholarship develops, and acquires its many distinguishing features: a sharp critical spirit, extensive antiquarian research, the compiling of enormous works of literary reference, etc. Now serious attempts are made to reconstruct the old music. Old musical scores are collected, various systems of notation investigated, and musical theory is re-examined.

Many useful books about the Lute and its music are written, but important additions to the repertoire are few. Mostly do the Lute masters confine themselves to publishing the tunes of the Ming and preceding dynasties in revised forms. The system of *ch'in* ideology is not worked out further, often even completely disregarded. At best, the statements scattered over the various Ming handbooks are reprinted. In most handbooks the teachings on the significance of the Lute are left out, and replaced by lengthy discussions on musical theory. A good example of such a dry handbook is the *Tzu-yüan-t'ang* handbook (cf. Appendix II, no. 15). During the Ch'ing period also the social standard of the Lute experts dropped considerably. While during the Ming and preceding periods famous Lute performers were as a rule great literati or high officials, in the Ch'ing period they were mostly more or less professional musicians, who taught the Lute for a living. One shall look in vain in biographical works of the period for the names of the publishers of the best handbooks.

The twentieth century brings the establishment of the Republic, and a revaluation of all values. Here we must break off our discussion of the history of *ch'in* ideology. Instead I may end with some remarks about the present state of Lute music, and its future.

In the turbulent first decennia of this century the Lute very nearly suffered the same fate as so many other Chinese old musical instruments, namely to see its tradition broken off, and its music forgotten. Fortunately a few old masters, scattered over the country, faithfully preserved their cherished art, and transmitted its secrets to a few pupils. They acted as guardians of the Lute and its music, while the ranks of scholars who understood it grew thinner every day, and while younger Chinese musicians were entirely absorbed in studies of western music.

Now, in recent years, the consistency of those few elder masters



is bearing fruit. For gradually in China there has come into existence a class of younger musicians, who combine a sound western musicological training with a deep interest in their own national music. Many of these have taken up the study of the Lute; first they patiently learn the art from the few elderly masters that are left, then they investigate the materials thus obtained in the light of modern musicological science. From these researches we may expect important results.<sup>9)</sup> The atmosphere that in former days surrounded the Lute player will soon belong definitely to the past—together with so much that was charming in the old Chinese life. But Lute music in itself has a bright future.

The present writer is one of those who—naïve and over-confident, maybe—believe in the existence of eternal values. He believes that what is really good or beautiful will last for ever; that such things can be ignored, neglected or suppressed, but that they shall never vanish entirely.

It is for this reason that he ventures to publish the preceding pages on the lore of the Chinese Lute, desultory and incomplete as they are. For the intrinsic beauty of the Lute and its music are such as to justify his confidence that others will continue where he left off.

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9) How necessary the work of these scholars is, is all too apparent; for the ignorance of many present-day Chinese with regard to their own music is appalling. In 1937 I read in a Chinese managed periodical, which as a rule maintains a high literary and scientific standard (*The T'ien-hsia Monthly*, vol. IV, p. 54: Music Chronicle), strange statements like the following: "Most of them (i.e. the Chinese musical instruments. v. G.) are still quite crude and simple: they do not admit of the development of highly finished techniques. . . . Moreover, the tone qualities of the musical instruments are none too pleasing. The seven-chord *Ch'in* (七絃琴) has hardly any sound at all." Then the author of the article in question goes on to say that all Chinese instruments must be "corrected", so as to make them reproduce the western tempered scale. Such a proposal, involving as it does the perversion or wanton destruction of precious musical data, could only be made in a time like the present, where everyday there is more music but less musicality, and where various sound-producing instruments throw the greatest masterpieces of western music to the crowd to be scrambled for.





# APPENDIX I. OCCIDENTAL LITERATURE ON THE LUTE.

1. Le P. Amiot, *Mémoires sur la Musique des Chinois tant anciens que modernes* (Mémoires concernant les Chinois, vol. VI), Paris 1780.

This comprehensive work is the first detailed description of Chinese music published in Europe. Its learned author discusses Chinese musical theory in general, the twelve sonorous tubes, and some of the more important instruments used in the ceremonial orchestra. His sources are personal observation and such

Chinese authoritative works as the *Lü-lü-ching-i* (律呂精義, by the Ming prince Chu Tsai-yü 朱載堉), and the *Lü-lü-chêng-i* (律呂正義, an official publication dated 1713). This book shows the same merits and the same defects as other works by 18th century missionaries on China. These learned priests made an excellent use of their daily contact with the flower of the Chinese literati: they carefully noted down the information supplied by the latter, and followed their advice regarding the books to be selected for further reference. On the other hand, the missionaries believed implicitly what their informants told them, and thought that their opinions on Chinese antiquity were unquestionable truth. Thus, for instance, with regard to music, the Chinese informants of our author gave him nothing but the Chinese traditional views on music, as exposed in some officially sanctioned standard works of later date. Yet this book by Father Amiot is a remarkable effort; when read critically, it will supply also the present-day student of Chinese music with much useful material.

The author gives considerable attention to both *ch'in* and *sê*. In the first chapter of this essay I already quoted one of his remarks on the importance of the Lute in Chinese cultural life (cf. above, Chapter I, page 3). Interesting is a list of books relating to the Lute, which the author gives on p. 24. Unfortunately the titles are given in transcription only, without author or date; therefore some of the items I could not identify. As the list shows which books on the Lute were studied by Court circles in the 18th century, I reproduce it here, with my identifications added between brackets.

- (49) *Kou tchouen kin pou*.
- (50) *Chen ki mi pou* (Shên-chi-pi-pu 神奇秘譜, by the Ming prince Chu Ch'üan; cf. Appendix II, No. 10).
- (51) *Tay kou y yn* (T'ai-ku-i-yin 太古遺音, same author).
- (52) *Kin jouan ki mong* (Ch'in-juan-ch'i-mêng 琴阮啓蒙, same author).
- (53) *Sien ko yao tché* (Hsien-ko-yao-chih 絃歌要指? The *Lü-lü-ching-i* mentions a Hsien-ko-yao-lu 絃歌要錄, by an unknown author).
- (54) *Tchoung ho fa jen* (Chung-ho-fa-jên 中和發輶, a Ming treatise by an unknown author, mentioned in the *Lü-lü-ching-i*).
- (55) *Y fa kin pou* (I-fa-ch'in-pu 遺法琴譜?)
- (56) *Tchan tchou kin pou* (Chang-chu-ch'in-pu 張助琴譜, a Ming handbook mentioned in the *Lü-lü-ching-i*).
- (57) *Hoang sien kin pou* (Huang-hsien-ch'in-pu 黃獻琴譜, a Ming handbook mentioned in the *Lü-lü-ching-i*, better known as the Wu-kang-ch'in-pu 梧岡琴譜, publ. 1546; Huang Hsien occupied an official position during 1488-1505).
- (58) *Siao loan kin pou* (Hsiao-luan-ch'in-pu 蕭鸞琴譜, a Ming handbook mentioned in the *Lü-lü-ching-i*).

2. J. A. van Aalst, *Chinese Music* (Imperial Maritime Customs, Special series, No. 6), Shanghai 1884 (re-issued at Peking in 1933).

During many years this book was for occidental students the standard work for information regarding Chinese music. Though it contains not a few mis-statements, and although most of its general observations are antiquated, it still is a usable book. It has a wider scope than Amiot's work, as here popular Chinese music is also included. There are many illustrations, but they are very

poorly done.

The *ch'in* is treated on pages 59-62. The description found there is generally correct; only it should be remembered that the author's observations on Lute music are based on the Lute of the ceremonial orchestra, and that therefore the tuning, for instance, does not apply to the Lute as solo instrument. On p. 60, the explanation of the finger technique of the right hand, the last sign (abbreviation of *ch'uan-fu* 全扶) is wrongly explained; cf. the same sign in the list given by me above, No. 12.

3. G. Soulié, *La Musique en Chine* (Extrait du Bulletin de l'Association Franco-chinoise), Paris 1911.

When compared with the preceding item, this book shows considerable progress. It is far more scientific than van Aalst's, and the illustrations are more accurate and better executed. On the base of its quality this work should long ago have superseded van Aalst's in sinological circles. For some reason or other, however, it has remained comparatively unknown, and until recent years van Aalst's book continued to appear in catalogues at a prohibitive price; that in 1933 it was reprinted, unrevised, tends to show how few are the serious students of music among present day orientalists.

On p. 30 the author gives a fairly detailed description of the *ch'in*. He gives a list of 44 abbreviated signs used in *ch'in* notation, which means an improvement on the meagre list given by van Aalst, though it contains many inaccuracies; these will appear on comparing this list with the one given by me above, p. 121. On p. 36 a page from a *ch'in* handbook is reproduced, and explained in detail. On p. 115 a short Lute composition (*Ku-ch'in-yin* 古琴吟) is given in western notation.

4. A. C. Moule, *A list of musical and other sound-producing instruments of the Chinese* (Royal Asiatic Society), Shanghai 1908.

This paper contains accurate descriptions of a great variety of Chinese musical instruments. The author adopted the method followed by V. Ch. Mahillon in his excellent 'Catalogue descriptif et analytique du musée instrumental du Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles' (1893); he tries to be as detailed as possible with regard to measurements and transcription of the scales. Next to the instruments used in ceremonial music, we also find descriptions of very popular instruments, used in the streets of Chinese towns. These data are important, for street music undergoes many changes, and generally leaves no written records.

Pp. 106-109 treat of the *ch'in*; the material is taken from Amiot, v. Aalst, etc., and no new data are added.

5. L. Laloy, *La Musique chinoise* (part of the series: *Les Musiciens Célèbres*), Paris, no date.

This small book, although of necessity rather popular, still is a very sound and useful survey of Chinese music, with the cultural and ideological aspects especially stressed. The illustrations are well chosen and of excellent execution. Contents: I. Les sources, II. La doctrine III. Les destins, IV. Le système, V. La gamme, VI. Les gammes nouvelles, VII. Les instruments, VIII. La notation, IX. Musique religieuse, X. Musique de chambre, XI. Musique populaire, XII. Musique de théâtre, XIII. Espoir, XIV. Mélodies notées.

Pp. 68-76 and 91-95 treat of the *ch'in*. The author duly stresses the importance of Lute ideology, the deep significance of this instrument and its music. Historical and cultural background are briefly, but very aptly, sketched. This book I recommend as the best introduction to the subject of Chinese music in general.

6. M. C o u r a n t, *Essai historique sur la musique classique des Chinois, avec un appendice relatif à la musique coréenne* (in: *Encyclopédie de la musique et Dictionnaire du Conservatoire*, part I pp. 77-241), Paris 1924.

M. Courant, the well-known French sinologue, to whom the orientalistic world is already heavily indebted for his magnificent *Corean Bibliography* (*Bibliographie Coréenne*, Paris 1894), has put us under a further obligation by this most detailed study on Chinese classical music. This essay is the most scientific and accurate account of Chinese music I know. Here for the first time the subject in its entirety has been investigated and reviewed by a competent scholar, who could consult all sources in the original, and in addition to that was—if my information is correct—himself a musician of no mean ability. Chinese musical theory is analysed in detail, and its often obscure expressions are translated into western terminology. Historical problems are discussed in detail, and in groping for their solution the author shows much discretion. First reading through the preceding item by Laloy, and then working through this essay by Courant, will in my opinion be the best preparation for any one who proposes to do some research in Chinese music. Courant's essay is divided in four parts: I. *Théorie musicale*, II. *Instruments*, III. *Orchestres et Choeurs*, IV. *Les idées cosmologiques et philosophiques*.

The *ch'in* is treated of on pp. 163-175. After a careful description of the instrument itself, the author goes on to an investigation of its theoretical side, and discusses its tunings in detail. Then he gives about a dozen of *ch'in* melodies in western transcription, all taken from the *T'ien-wên-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng* (cf. App. II, no. 17). He admits that these versions are arbitrary, as they must be because of the fundamental differences existing between the Chinese scale and ours; or, as the author puts it: 'Ce serait sans doute fausser l'essence des systèmes harmoniques chinois que de les vouloir réduire à nos formules' (p. 169). Yet his transcriptions are useful to give the student at least a general idea of what *ch'in* music looks like. I may add that execution on the cello comes nearest to the tone of the Chinese original. The essay ends with an extensive bibliography of western and Chinese sources consulted, and a useful index, where the reader finds the Chinese characters for every name and term occurring in the essay.

I may add in passing that the few pages treating of Korean music (pp. 211-220) are less satisfactory. To supplement what is given here, one should consult A. Eckardt, *Koreanische Musik*, Tokyo 1930. Sinologues I would refer to the *Ak-hak-kwe-pôn* 樂學軌範. This is the great Korean standard work on Chinese and Korean music, written in Chinese, and profusely illustrated. It was written in 1493 by the scholar Syông Kyôn 成俔. The Korean original is now extremely rare; fortunately in 1933 a good photographic reprint was published at Keijō, by the Kōten-kankō-kai 古典刊行會.



## APPENDIX II. CHINESE LITERATURE ON THE LUTE.

## A. GENERAL

1. *Ch'in-tsa* 琴操, a collection of about fifty motifs of ancient melodies. This book contains no musical notation: only the title of each tune is given, with a few words about its composer, the circumstances that inspired him, the significance of the music, etc. As the oldest list of Lute melodies extant, this book has great documentary value. Opinions differ as to whether its authorship must be ascribed to the famous literatus and musician Ts'ai Yung (蔡邕, 133-192), or to the equally famous man of letters K'ung Yen (孔衍, 268-320). The text is to be found in the *Tu-hua-chai-ts'ung-shu* 讀畫齋叢書, a collection of reprints of classical works published in 1799 by Ku Hsiu 顧修, and the *P'ing-ts'in-kuan-ts'ung-shu* 平津館叢書, a collection of texts published by the great authority on the classics Sun Hsing-yen (孫星衍, 1753-1808). I have used the excellent Japanese official edition (*kampan* 官板), publ. 1832 in one vol., where the text as established by Sun Hsing-yen is reprinted, together with the preface by the scholar Ma Jui-chên 馬瑞辰, dated 1805.

2. *Ch'in-shih* 琴史 'History of the Lute', in 6 ch.; cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 113, leaf 8 verso. The author of this treatise is the great scholar of the Sung period Chu Ch'ang-wên (朱長文, style: Po-yüan 伯原, 1041-1100). Ch. 1-5 contain biographies of more than 150 famous Lute players, chronologically arranged; the 6th ch. treats of the Lute itself, and is divided into eleven parts. These discuss 1. Sonorous tubes 瑩律, 2. Strings 釋絃, 3. Dimensions 明度, 4. Form 擬象, 5. Tones 論音, 6. Modes 審調, 7. Songs 聲歌, 8. Manufacture 廣制, 9. Beauty 盡美, 10. Significance 志言, and 11. History 叙史. The preface to this book is dated 1084. The author, prevented through illness from taking part in the literary examinations, devoted the greater part of his life to literary pursuits. He was especially interested in those objects that are dear to the literatus: his researches in this field are collected in his *Mo-ch'ih-p'ien* 墨池篇, preface dated 1066. The author's grandfather, Chu I 朱億, was an expert on the Lute, and Chu Ch'ang-wên continued his tradition. The *Ch'in-shih* is written in excellent, highly polished prose. Unfortunately historical details and precise information are sacrificed to the style; further it is to be regretted that the author never mentions his sources. Still the book contains much useful material. I used the edition as published in the *Lien-t'ing-shih-êrh-chung* 楝亭十二種, a collection of reprints publ. at Shanghai in 1921; the originals were collected by Ts'ao Yin (曹寅, 1658-1712).

3. *K'ao-p'an-yü-shih* 考盤餘事 'Desultory remarks on furnishing the abode of the retired scholar,' in 4 ch.; cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 130 leaf 2 recto. The title of this book refers to an ode of the Shih-ching (Decade of Wei 衛, 2), which opens with the line 'He built his hut near the stream in the vale' 考盤在澗. This book contains very detailed descriptions of all the objects belonging to the traditional outfit of a scholar of refined and cultured taste, e.g., old books and scrolls, incense, utensils for making tea, etc. To each of these objects a *ch'ien* 箋 'memorandum' is devoted; the *Ch'in-chien* 琴箋 is to be found at the end of ch. 2. The compiler is the well-known Ming scholar T'u Lung (屠隆, style: Ch'ang-ching 長卿, *Chin-shih* in 1577). In China this book was extremely popular; it



was published in various editions, and may be found in several *ts'ung-shu*. A nicely edited Japanese reprint appeared in 1803, with a preface by the Japanese sinologue Hayashi Jussai (林述齋, 1768-1841).

4. *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* 遵生八牋 'Eight treatises on living in accordance with nature' (the title page of the original Ming edition, dated 1591 reads *tsun* 尊 instead of *tsun* 遵, which could be rendered as: venerating, nursing life), 8 ch.; cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 123, leaf 2 recto. Compiled by Kao Lien 高濂, a poet and playwright of the later part of the Ming dynasty. About his life and career little is known; a short biographical note may be found in the *Ming-ts'ü-tsung* 明詞綜, ch. 4. His *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* is an extensive encyclopedical collection, chiefly bearing a medical character: it indicates how, by following Taoist rules, one may live in good health and attain to a high age. But besides these, a great variety of other subjects is treated, special attention being given to dress, food etc. Thus this book is an important document for our knowledge of daily life and customs during the Ming period. As the title indicates, the work is divided into 8 sections. For our present subject the 6th section is the most important. It bears the title *Yen-hsien-ch'ing-shang* 燕閒清賞: 'Refined enjoyment of elegant leisure'. This section discusses all subjects dear to the scholar: paintings and how to collect and preserve them; inkstones and ink, paper, brushes, brush stands, ornamental rocks, seals, etc. It is in this section also that we find a discussion of the Lute, entitled *Lun-ch'in* 論琴. p. 70 sq. Here the author gives a concise, but fairly accurate survey of the study of the Lute. Thereafter we find some pages on cranes and how to rear them.

5. *Ch'in-ching* 琴經 'Classical Book of the Lute,' in 14 ch., by the Lute master Chang Ta-ming (張大命, called Yu-kun 右袞). First preface by the Ming scholar Yeh Hsiang-kao (葉向高, cf. *Ming-shih* ch. 240), dated 1609; second preface by Liu Ta-jên 劉大任; author's preface dated 1609. Undated colophon by Ch'ên Wu-ch'ang 陳五昌. The original, finely executed Ming edition of this valuable book is extremely rare; but occasionally Chinese or Japanese manuscript copies may be found. About Chang Ta-ming, who later also published a collection of tunes in notation, the *Yang-ch'ün-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 陽春堂琴譜, little is known except that he was a man from Fukien. The *Ch'in-ching* is remarkable in that it does not contain a single Lute tune in notation. The work is concerned with musical theory, rules for the Lute player, how to read the *ch'in-pu*, notes on famous old tunes and instruments, hints for appraising antique Lutes, how to build Lutes, how to select the correct surroundings for playing the Lute, and finally an extensive collection of quotations from older literature.

6. *Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* 青蓮舫琴雅 'Elegance of the Lute, from the Blue-Lotus Boat', in 4 ch.; cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 114 leaf 7 verso. A comprehensive collection of literary data concerning the Lute, compiled by Lin Yulin (林有麟, style: Jên-fu 仁甫); author's preface dated 1614. Further there are two prefaces by Ming painters, the first by Li Shao-chi 李紹箕, the second by Chou Yü-tu 周裕度 (for biographical notes cf. *Ming-hua-lu* 明畫錄, ch. 6 and 4). The author says that he wrote this book while traveling by boat through Kiangsu Province, hence the title. The book contains valuable material though collected without much discrimination; many of the original sources quoted from are either lost now or difficult to obtain.

7. *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu* 琴學叢書 'Collected writings on the study of the Lute'; first edition (1911) in 32 ch., second enlarged edition in 43 ch. (1925). The collected writings of the contemporary Lute expert Yang Tsung-chi (楊宗稷, style: Shih-po 時百, lit. name Chiu-i-shan-jên 九疑山人). In my essay I have repeatedly quoted from this work. It is, as far as I know, the only real original and thorough study by a modern Chinese on the Lute, and all questions relating to it. The author was a teacher of music in a school at Peking. This book is the result of the study of a lifetime, by a man who not only was a well known Lute player himself, but also had excellent opportunities for consulting literary and actual materials. Though one may not always agree with the author's conclusions, still it is a work that no serious student of the Lute can afford to ignore. It is especially important to scholars not living in China or Japan: for here they will find data that are unobtainable outside the orient: the author relates his discussions with great living Lute masters, his experiences with curio dealers when buying antique Lutes, his own attempts at constructing Lutes, etc. A list of the various items this collection contains will show its rich contents. 1. *Ch'in-ts'ui* 琴粹, various studies on Lute music, especially on the tunes; the 4th section deals with old instruments. 2. *Ch'in-hua* 琴話, miscellaneous notes on the Lute. 3. *Ch'in-pu* 琴譜, a special study on the oldest *ch'in* tune preserved, the Yu-lan 幽蘭 manuscript; further a study on the tune *Liu-shui* 流水. 4. *Ch'in-hsüeh-sui-pi* 琴學隨筆, stray notes of the author on various subjects connected with the Lute. 5. *Ch'in-yü-man-lu* 琴餘漫錄, same as the preceding. 6. *Ch'in-ching* 琴鏡 'Mirror of the Lute,' a collection of well known tunes, transcribed in the special notation invented by the author: the *chien-tzu* are given both in their original and their unabbreviated forms; pitch and measure are accurately indicated. These notations should be a great help to every one who tries to learn how to play the Lute without a teacher. 7. *Ch'in-sê-ho-pu* 琴瑟合譜, tunes for Lute and *sê* together, with special discussion of the tuning of the *sê*. 8. *Ch'in-hsüeh-wên-ta* 琴學問答, all kinds of problems regarding the Lute, discussed in dialogue form. 9. *Ts'ang-ch'in-lu* 藏琴錄, a most detailed description of the Lutes in the author's collection. 10. *Ch'in-sê-hsin-pu* 琴瑟新譜, tunes for Lute and *sê* together. 11. *Ch'in-ching-hsü* 琴鏡續, sequence to item 6. 12. Yu-lan-ho-shêng 幽蘭和聲, a reaction upon the author's discussion of the Yu-lan tune, by Li Chi 李濟, another contemporary scholar. Besides the items enumerated above, the collection contains several minor essays on musical theory, the sonorous tubes, etc. 8. *Ch'in-shu-ts'un-mu* 琴書存目, a *catalogue raisonné* of practically all books on the Lute that have been preserved, either in their entirety, or in title only, in 6 ch. Published by Chou Ch'ing-yün 周慶雲, a great collector of books and manuscripts, and a friend of Yang Tsung-chi, the author of the preceding item. First preface by the famous bibliophile Miao Ch'üan-sun (繆荃孫, 1844-1919), dated 1915 (旃蒙單閼, i.e. 乙卯), second preface by the author, dated 1914. Two additional ch., entitled *Pieh-lu* 別錄, list books about music in general. The items are arranged chronologically, and details about the authors and the editions are added; often the prefaces are reprinted in their entirety. See my remarks above, ch. III, section 1.

9. *Ch'in-shih* 琴史, biographies of famous Lute players, in 8 chapters, compiled by Chou Ch'ing-yün. First preface by Yang Tsung-chi, undated. Author's

preface dated 1919. The author intended this book as a supplement to the *Ch'in-shih* of Chu Ch'ang-wên (see above, no. 2). It is a useful source book, containing a tremendous number of biographical notes on people who in some way or other were connected with Lute music: we find famous Lute masters, well known lute makers, editors of Lute handbooks, etc. All items are arranged chronologically, and the sources indicated. The last chapter (*kuei-hsiu* 關秀) is especially devoted to lady Lute players.

#### B. SPECIAL

10. *Shên-chi-pi-pu* 神奇秘譜, handbook for the Lute, in 3 ch., by the Prince of Ning 寧王, personal name Chu Ch'üan (朱權, died 1448). The author's literary name was Ch'ü-hsien (驪仙 'Emaciated Immortal,' i. e. Crane), therefore this handbook is also referred to as *Ch'ü-hsien-ch'in-pu*. Author's preface dated 1425. For details about the author, cf. below, appendix III: The Lute as an antique, where also a list is given of the books published by this Prince. This is the oldest printed *ch'in-pu* preserved, but unfortunately extremely rare. The only Chinese catalogue in which it is mentioned, is that of the famous Ming library T'ien-i-ko; but various kinds of disasters have ravaged this library, and a recent study on the books that are left does not mention this valuable item (cf. *T'ien-i-ko-ts'ang-shu-k'ao* 天一閣藏書考, by the modern bibliographer Ch'ên Têng-yüan 陳登原, Shanghai 1932). The Library of the Cabinet (Naikaku-bunko 內閣文庫) in Tōkyō has a fine first edition, and I possess a beautifully executed manuscript copy. This handbook is a magnificent example of Ming printing: three large sized volumes, printed in big characters on good paper. It was famous during the Ming period already. Kao Lien (op. cit., *Yen-hsien-ch'ing-shang*, p. 78) says: "The people of our day think the handbook *Shên-chi-pi-pu* by the Prince of Ning the best. But one should try to obtain the first, large-sized edition. The author had the text carefully collated and revised, so that every dot and every stroke is correct. This is a good handbook, which should be treasured. The later editions are not worth being looked at." 近世以寧藩神奇秘譜為最,然須得初刻大本、驪仙命工校訂點畫不訛、是為善譜可寶、若翻刻本不足觀。The only objection to this handbook is that the author has not been consequent in his system of notation, and that the *chien-tzû* therefore have become unnecessarily complicated. One gets the impression that the compiler purposely made the notation obscure, so that only expert players could use it. He was very particular about a strict observation of the rules for the Lute player: in his preface he says that properly only high officials should be allowed to occupy themselves with the Lute.

11. *Pu-hsü-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 步虛堂琴譜, another early Ming handbook, in 9 ch.; compiled by Ku I-chiang 顧挹江. First preface by Sun Ch'êng-ên (孫承恩, cf. *Ming-shih-tsung* 明詩綜 ch. 34), dated 1551; second preface by Wang T'ing 王挺, undated; third preface by Ch'ên Chung-chou 陳中州, dated 1556. Ch'ên Chung-chou did not sign his preface: he only added the imprint of a seal with his literary name Kang-i-tzû 亢惕子. There is a colophon by Wang Ying-chên (王應辰, cf. *Ming-shih-tsung*, ch. 50), dated 1556. This handbook, too, is a fine specimen of Ming printing. Though rare, it is sometimes found in Chinese catalogues. Its contents are remarkable because of their originality: a great number of well known tunes are given, but all were revised by the compiler, who considerably improved

their musical value. The book bears an outspoken Taoist character.

12. *Ch'in-pu-ho-pi-ta-ch'üan* 琴譜合璧大全, not divided into ch., compiler Yang Piao-chêng 楊表正; first preface anonymous, and undated; second preface by Liu Yü 劉御, dated 1573. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 114 leaf 7 verso. The two preceding items were examples of handbooks edited by scholars of high culture; this one was published by a literatus of very low scholarly standing. The tunes are given in a kind of simplified version, and all — as indicated by *ho-pi* in the title — are accompanied by words. This text of the songs must be of the editor's own making, for it is written in a queer mixture of literary language and colloquial. The text is interspersed with refrains like *ya-ya*, *ai-ya*, such as are used only in Chinese popular music. Yet this handbook seems to have been very much in use; it was printed in an extraordinarily great number of copies, so that even now it can easily be bought. It saw a second edition, which can be distinguished from the first by the fact that in the second one the picture after the prefaces (representing the author playing the Lute) is missing.

13. *T'ai-ku-i-yin* 太古遺音, in ch., compiled by Yang Lun (楊倫, lit. name Tung-an 桐庵); cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 114, leaf 8 recto. Preface by Li Wên-fang 李文芳, colophon by Lü Lan-ku 呂蘭谷, both undated. A good Ming handbook, much better edited than the preceding item. The Imperial Catalogue is much incensed at the fact that on the picture in the first volume the author is shown together with Chung Tzû-ch'i 鍾子期, the famous Lute player of antiquity 繪鍾子期像而以己像則其後尤爲妄誕. The arrogance of this picture seems to have been recognized already at an early date, for most copies which I have seen were printed from a revised block, where the image of Chung Tzû-ch'i has been deleted from the unorthodox picture. To this handbook there is usually added a supplement by the same author, entitled *Po-ya-hsin-fa* 伯牙心法; to this Yü Yen 俞彥 added a preface, dated 1609.

14. *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu* 五知齋琴譜, in 8 ch., by the famous Lute master Hsü Ch'i 徐祺. First preface dated 1724, second, by Huang Chên 黃鑑, dated 1722; third, by Hsü Chün 徐俊, undated; fourth, by Chou Lu-fêng 周魯封, dated 1721. This may be said to be the most popular handbook in existence. Printed in a large number of copies, it is nowadays easily obtainable at bookshops in China and Japan. The introductory chapters are very rich in contents, giving general information on the Lute and its history, and an outline of *ch'in* ideology. It contains no new tunes, but all have been revised by Master Hsü Ch'i, and the tunes are recorded by his son (Hsü Chün, the writer of the third preface) and two of his pupils (the writers of the second and fourth prefaces), in the way the master used to play them. The tunes are recorded very carefully, with many additional indications regarding tempo, expression, etc. The scholarly standard of the book is not high: the style of the introductory parts is not very polished, and shows many misprints. But this does not detract from the musical value of the tunes. From a musical point of view, this handbook is the best of those published during the Ch'ing period.

15. *Tzû-yüan-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 自遠堂琴譜, in 12 ch., by Wu Hung (吳虹, style: Shih-po 仕柏). First preface by Li T'ing-ching 李廷敬, second by Chang Tun-jên 張敦仁, third by Ch'iao Chung-wu 喬鍾吳, all dated 1802. Wu Hung continued the tradition of Hsü Ch'i (see the preceding item). The three people who wrote



the prefaces were his pupils, who published the tunes as played by Master Wu Hung. This handbook is typical for the *ch'in-pu* of the Ch'ing period: in the introductory chapters not a word is said about the ideology of the Lute. Instead we find lengthy discussions on musical theory; for these, as the preface says, Chang Tun-jên, who was a great mathematician, was responsible. Ch. 12 gives a number of tunes with the words added to the notation; this part was edited by Li T'ing-ching. A curious feature is that the title page bears the date 1801, while the prefaces are dated one year later.

16. *Ch'un-ts'ao-t'ang-ch'in-pu* 春草堂琴譜, in 6 ch., by Ts'ao Shang-chiung (曹尚綱, style: Ping-wên 炳文). First preface by Yen P'ei-nien 閻沛年, undated; author's preface dated 1744. Coeditors were Su Ching 蘇璟 and Tai Yüan 戴源. This book gives various well known tunes in comparatively simple versions. The editing is very carefully done. With the *Wu-chih-chai* handbook, this *ch'in-pu* is much recommended by present-day Lute masters. In 1864 it was re-published by the Lute master Chu Tung-chün 祝桐君.

17. *T'ien-wên-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng* 天聞閣琴譜集成, in 16 ch., published by T'ang I-ming 唐彝銘, in 1876. Author's preface, with the same date. This handbook, as indicated by the title, is a collection of reprints from other handbooks. Well known tunes are given in often as many as five or six different versions. Many of the good *ch'in-pu* being very rare, it was the compiler's intention to put their contents at the disposal of Lute students in a convenient form. The introductory chapters (which fill 4 volumes) are also compiled from other handbooks. This collection is very handy for quick reference. It is to be regretted, however, that the publisher confined himself to simply reprinting the various tunes, in exactly the same form as he found them (the sources being indicated in the lower part of the outer margin): thus there is no unity in the notation of the tunes. This inconsistency in the use of various *ch'ien-tzû* will confuse the beginner. It would have been much better, if the publisher had transcribed all tunes in a uniform system. Some of his own compositions are inserted among the others; these are distinguished by the literary name of the compiler, *Sung-hsien* 松仙, being printed in the lower outer margin. Still it is a useful book because of its varied contents. It is particularly recommended to such students as do not have a large collection of handbooks at their disposal.

18. *Ch'in-hsüeh-ju-mên* 琴學入門, in 2 ch., by the Lute master Chang Ho 張鶴; author's preface dated 1864. Reprinted several times, in various forms. This is the most elementary handbook for the Lute player, recommended by present-day Lute masters as the best introduction to the subject. The finger technique is explained clearly, the tunes are few, but each is fully annotated, and accompanied by a simpler score (*kung-ch'ih* 工尺 system). Any one desiring to study the Lute would do well to start with working through this handbook.

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### APPENDIX III

#### THE LUTE AS AN ANTIQUE

The greater part of the articles which surround the Chinese scholar in his library not only serve as decorations, but are also at the same time objects of appreciative study.

A bronze sacrificial vessel of the Han dynasty placed on a carved ebony stand, enhances by its delicate outlines and intriguing patina the antique atmosphere of the library, while the archaic inscriptions inside its cover also furnish the happy owner with material for writing a learned treatise discussing its date and provenance ; a coiled dragon of transparent jade lying on the desk serves the double purpose of holding a wet writing brush, and of providing the scholar and his friends with a topic for discussion on the use jade was put to by the ancients.

It is this tendency to appreciate antiques not only as works of art, but at the same time as objects for discussion and investigation, that confers upon the old-fashioned Chinese scholar a distinctly humanistic touch. The type of the Chinese literatus curiously resembles that of the classical scholar of medieval Europe. Just as the old humanist of Europe loved to surround himself with marble busts and bronze statues, while caressing their exquisite shapes, at the same time attempting to decide their date and determine their style ; or, of a quiet evening, enjoyed unrolling on his heavy desk old palimpsests, while appreciating the powerful writing penned on the greenish parchment, simultaneously trying to detect errors made by the copyists, and looking for *variae lectiones* : so a Chinese scholar, while lovingly handling his treasures, will ponder over the correct interpretation of their inscriptions, and, dwelling in thought in bygone times, grope for an understanding of the significance the object had at the time when it was made.

To appreciate beauty in a scholarly way is termed in Chinese *wan* 玩. This verb presupposes as its subject a man of scholarly tastes. 'Enjoying the moon' *wan-yüeh* 玩月, is but a very unsatisfactory translation. Any ordinary person with an innate feeling for beauty may derive enjoyment from gazing at the full autumn moon. But it is only the cultured scholar who is able, when seeing this same moon, to remember some lines by a celebrated poet, to revisualize a painting by some famous

artist, and by thus testing his own sensations by those of kindred spirits, experience that exalted joy that comes only from a full intellectual realization of the emotions of the heart. Nothing less than this, and probably more, is implied in the term *wan*.

This somewhat lengthy digression was necessary: without this preliminary understanding it would be difficult to interpret correctly one of the many aspects of that most accomplished of all Chinese musical instruments: the Lute. For the Lute, next to being a musical instrument, is also a favourite object for antiquarian appreciation.

As I have already pointed out above, the Lute, though it is one of the regular paraphernalia of the Chinese scholar, is rarely played. Not because its music is irrelevant: on the contrary, it represents in the opinion of many, the apex of Chinese music, quite unsurpassed in China's long history. But to play the Lute expertly presupposes a study of years, and a competent master; and few scholars have the leisure and inclination to devote so much time to this art, and good teachers are comparatively rare. Therefore, while the enjoyment of playing the Lute is reserved for a small circle of the happy few, appreciation of the Lute as an antique lies within the reach of every scholar. It is this aspect of the Lute that I propose to treat here.

\* \* \*

When a scholar is lucky enough to obtain an ancient Lute bearing inscriptions by the hand of some famous literatus of old, it is an event in his life, and often he will change the name of his library to commemorate the auspicious day. Thus Hsiang Yüan-pien 項元汴, one of the greatest connoisseurs and bibliophiles of the end of the Ming period, changed the name of his studio into T'ien-lai Hall 天籟閣, after he had acquired a Lute called 'Harmony of the Spheres' T'ien-lai 天籟. This instrument had belonged to Sun Têng (孫登, style Kung-ho 公和), a famous Lute master of the third century A.D. Cf. the rubbing of the bottom-board of this Lute, reproduced on ill. I.

The predilection of the Chinese scholar for the romantic and the fanciful found expression also in the Lute. From time to time *iron* (see below), *earthenware* (cf. China Journal, Vol. XI, 5: J. C. Ferguson, A ceramic Lute of the Sung dynasty), and *jade* (cf. numerous references in Chinese literature to yü-ch'in 玉琴) Lutes make their appearance. Such Lutes are useless as musical instruments, but they are highly valued as antiques. Scholars covered them with appreciative essays, lauding the inner significance of the Lute and expanding themselves upon the principles of Lute ideology. Illustration II shows a rubbing taken from an

iron Lute said to have been made by Sun Têng (see above). It came originally from the collection of Hsiang Yüan-pien, but during the Ch'ing period eminent scholars like Juan Yüan (阮元, 1764-1849), Liang Chang-chü (梁章鉅, 1775-1849) and Chang Ting-chi (張廷濟, 1768-1848) added appreciative inscriptions.

Such Lutes, however, are exceptions. As a rule the antique Lutes are made of wood; if they are still in fit condition to be played, this enhances their value. An antique Lute should not be a mere curiosity: its strings should be sounded, to revive the forgotten melodies of olden times.

\* \* \*

For judging an ancient Lute there exist two main criteria: first, the condition of its lacquer, second, the inscriptions it bears.

Before discussing these points in more detail, a few words about the building of Lutes are necessary.

The body of the Lute, which functions as a sounding-box, consists of two wooden boards, superimposed one upon the other. The upper board, made of *t'ung* wood 桐, is concave, while the lower one, made of *tsü* wood 梓 is flat. On the inner side these boards are chiseled out, so that when fitted together they form a sort of oblong box. This box may have various models. Most common is the so-called Chung-ni model 仲尼式, shown in illustration XIII; but many other models exist, varying from a simple straight box (*chéng-ho-shih* 正合式) to models showing milled edges (*lo-hsia-shih* 落霞式 (or the shape of a banana leaf (*chiao-yeh-shih* 蕉葉式)). In the lower board two openings are cut out, which serve to transmit the sound; they may be compared with the two S-shaped sound holes of a violin, which also serve to increase the acoustic power of the instrument. It would seem that apart from minor differences the construction of the Lute has remained the same since the Han period.

There are special handbooks for the Lute player, the so-called *ch'in-pu* 琴譜, which generally give more or less detailed instructions as to how Lutes should be built. The most extensive of them is the *Yü-ku-chai-ch'in-pu* 與古齋琴譜, published in 1855 by a well-known Lute master from Chekiang province, Chu Fêng-chieh (祝鳳喈, literary name T'ung-chün 桐君). This book does not contain any Lute tunes, but is concerned solely with elaborate directions regarding the Lute in general. The author not only gives his own opinions, but also often quotes from reliable older sources: for the following observations I have therefore, unless stated otherwise, relied upon this source.

Just as with the masterpieces of Antonio Stradivari, so also with



ancient Lutes the sonorousness depends upon the quality of the wood used, and especially on that of the varnish with which it is covered. As regards the wood, *t'ung* and *tsü* are preferably chosen, but also other kinds of wood may be used: the most important thing is to see that the material used be old and entirely dry. Dry, decaying pillars from ruined temples, and even boards from excavated coffins are highly recommended. Fanciful associations also play a rôle: one should try to find a mouldering pinetree overhanging a bubbling mountain stream, or a weather-beaten cedar in a secluded vale.

The two boards having been hewn and chiseled into the proper shape (see illustration III and IV), they are luted together with a special kind of glue, the main material of which is isinglass. The boards touch each other round the whole circumference, and they are further held together by two studs, one called the Heaven Pillar *t'ien-chu* 天柱, located right above the Dragon Pond, and the other called Earth Pillar *ti-chu* 地柱, to be found under the Dragon Pond. The former is round, the latter square, in accordance with the ancient Chinese belief that Heaven is round and Earth square.

Thereafter follows the most important phase of the building process: covering this sounding-box with a coat of varnish. As the word varnish suggests a rather thin coat, it is a misnomer in this connection: cement would be a more suitable term, as the thickness of this coat varies from 3 to 5 mm<sup>1)</sup>. Its constitution resembles that of old Chinese lacquer in general; cf. the directions for making lacquer as given by T'ao Tsung-i 陶宗儀 in his *Cho-kêng-lu* (輟耕錄, original preface dated 1366; 汲古閣 edition ch. 30, section Hsiu-ch'i 髹器), and for a more detailed description, the Ming treatise *Hsiu-ch'ih-lu* 髹飾錄, by Huang Ch'êng 黃成 (an old manuscript preserved in Japan, published in 1928 at Tokyo by the Tōkyō-bijutsu-gakkō-kōyukai 東京美術學校校友會; original preface dated 1625, preface by the modern Chinese editor of the text, Chu Ch'i-ch'ien 朱啓鈴 dated 1927. There also exists a Chinese reprint in folio of this

1) A curious parallel is found in the varnish used for covering old Arabian and Persian Lutes, especially the *rubāb*; cf. H. G. Farmer, *The structure of the Arabian and Persian Lute in the Middle Ages* (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Jan. 1939, p. 49). There the work *Kanz-al-tuhaf* is quoted: 'Some people powder glass and mix it with glue, which is then poured on the sound-chest in order that the tone of the instrument may be increased'. Farmer points out that in England in 1837 a same device was discovered by J. F. Grosjean, a harp-maker of London; he said about his discovery: 'My improvement consists in applying vitrified or crystallized matters to sounding boards . . . Powdered glass ground very fine is sifted evenly over the sounding board, which has previously been warmed and coated with cement.'

edition by Chu Ch'i-ch'ien; the texts are exactly the same, except for the omission of the Japanese reading-marks, and a few marginal notes). There are, however, some important differences, as for instance that while applying the Lute cement no layer of cloth is added. The *Ch'in-ching* 琴經, a handbook for the study of the Lute written by a famous Lute connoisseur of the Ming period (cf. Appendix II, no. 5), and published in 1609, gives the following directions as to how this cement should be made: 'Ashes from deer horns are the best material, but ashes from cow horns may also be used. One obtains the best results when these ashes are mixed with copper filings (other sources recommend gold or silver filings, and also powdered earthenware shards. Transl.). When applied for the first time (it is implied that the mixture is diluted with thin glue. Transl.), the mixture is thin, and shows a rough surface. When it has dried, it should be polished with a rough stone. Applied as second coating, the mixture is thicker and more even; after it has become dry, it is polished with water. Polish two times with water, and three times with oil. When applied for the third coating, the mixture should be of fine consistency' (ch. 7: 鹿角灰爲上, 牛角灰次之, 或雜以銅鎔屑尤妙, 第一次灰粗而薄, 候乾用粗石略磨, 第二次中灰勻而厚, 候乾用水磨, 二次水磨, 三次油磨, 次用細灰). This process is repeated until a perfectly smooth and even surface is obtained. When this is well dried, one proceeds to apply the last coat of lacquer, called, just as in the ordinary lacquer process *tsao-ch'i* 糙漆, consisting of several layers of varnish. The colour of this varnish differs considerably: a deep black is most common, but also red, greenish, spotted or marbled varieties are used.

In course of time this coat develops tiny cracks, the so-called *tuan-wên* 斷文 'burst patterns'. It is by observing the shape of these cracks that connoisseurs determine the age of a Lute.

On this the *Ch'in-ching* quoted above has the following to say: 'The age of a Lute is proved by the *tuan-wên*. If a Lute is less than 500 years old, it will not show cracks: the older it is, the more cracks it shows. There are many varieties of *tuan-wên*: the so-called Serpent Belly cracks (*shê-fu* 蛇腹, also written 蛇蚶), run transversely over the upper board of the Lute, one or two inches apart from each other, in even segments, giving the Lute the appearance of the belly of a serpent. There are also very fine cracks, called Cow Hair (*niu-mao* 牛毛), resembling hundreds and thousands of hairs; they generally appear on both sides of the Lute, but they do not show near the *Yo-shan* (i.e. the high bridge on right): sometimes they may also be found on the upper side of the instrument and on the bottom board. Further

there are Plum Blossom cracks (*mei-hua* 梅花): these show a pattern resembling the petals of a plum blossom. Cracks of this shape will not appear if the Lute is not over a thousand years old. Of all lacquered implements, only the Lute shows *tuan-wên*. The reason is that in most cases of lacquer work as a rule cloth is first applied, while with the Lute this is omitted. Another reason is that other lacquer implements are left standing or lying about freely, while the Lute day and night bears the strain of the strings. Further after many years the wood of a Lute shrinks, and becomes loosened from the coat of cement, which then cracks. When one tries to polish away these cracks, or even when one tries to cover them with a new coat of shining varnish, this only serves to make them appear more clearly. The genuine *tuan-wên* are clear cut like the edge of a sword, and can be distinguished thereby from the false ones' (ch. 6: 古琴以斷紋爲證, 琴不歷五百歲不斷, 愈久則斷愈多, 斷有數等, 有蛇腹斷, 其紋橫截琴面相去或寸或二寸, 節相似, 如蛇腹下紋, 又有細斷紋, 即牛毛斷, 如髮千百條, 亦停勻, 多在琴之兩旁而進岳處則無之, 又有面與底皆斷者, 又有梅花斷, 其紋如梅花片, 此非千餘載不能有也, 一應漆器無斷紋而琴獨有之者, 蓋器多用布漆, 琴則不用, 皆器安閑而琴日夜爲絃所激, 又歲久桐腐而漆相離破斷紋隱處, 雖經磨礪, 至再重加光漆, 其紋愈見, 然真斷紋, 如劍峰, 偽則否). Next to the three kinds of *tuan-wên* mentioned above, some sources mention also 'Cracked Ice bursts' *ping-lieh-wên* 冰裂文, which seem to appear about at the same time as the Plum blossom cracks.

Observations in other handbooks are identical with the above. It should be noted, however, that opinions differ as to the exact number of years necessary to produce the various kinds of *tuan-wên*. The *Yü-ku-chai-ch'in-pu* quoted above gives considerably lower figures than the *Ch'in-ching*: 70 to 80 years for the Cow Hairs, 100 for the Serpent Belly, and 200 to 3000 for the Plum Blossoms. The truth appears to be nearer to the first of these two estimates.

The handbooks warn especially against false *tuan-wên*: they may be made artificially by alternately exposing the instrument to cold and heat, and by other tricks. But their genuineness or non-genuineness can be immediately detected: genuine *tuan-wên* do not break the smoothness of the surface of the Lute. If so they would interfere with the music, for while playing the Lute the fingers of the left hand often press down a string on the board, and rub it softly to produce various kinds of vibrato. If the surface is not perfectly smooth, the string will rattle. Or, in the words of the Ming connoisseur Kao Lien 高濂: 'If one runs one's fingers over artificial *tuan-wên*, they will be felt; but genuine cracks, although

they are clearly seen, can never be felt' (*Tsun-shêng-pa-chien*, cf. app. II, No. 4, chapter XV, p. 75 : 偽者以手摩之裂紋有痕, 眞者有紋可而拂之則無).

As regards the inscriptions of a Lute, these may be divided into two categories : those inside the sounding box (*ch'ih-nei* 池內), and those on the bottom board (*ti-ming* 底銘).

Those inside the Lute are written or engraved on the inner side of the upper board, at a time when the two boards have not yet been fitted together. The characters are written in two columns, opposite the Dragon Pond, but well to the right and left, so that when the Lute is finished, they are barely visible when looking obliquely through the Dragon Pond. Thus these inscriptions can only be written either when the Lute is made, or when it has been taken apart for a second time, and entirely rebuilt. They therefore furnish the observer with dependable material for fixing the date of the instrument. These inscriptions mostly state the date, and the name of the builder or rebuilder. A well-known Lute, preserved at Peking, bears, for instance, the following inscription. Opposite the Dragon Pond, on the right : 'Rebuilt in 1636, by Chang Jung-hsiu from Kiangsu' ; and on the left : 'Rehewn by the recluse of the Chiu-i mountain' 明崇禎丙子古吳張睿修重修, 九疑山人再斲. According to connoisseurs this instrument dates from the Sung period (960-1279). In the Ming period (1368-1644) its cement was so damaged, that Chang Jung-hsiu found it necessary to take it apart and rebuild it. Then, in recent times ('Recluse of the Chiu-i mountain' is one of the literary names of a contemporary Lute master Yang Tsung-chi, see below) it was again rebuilt, and this fact duly recorded.

While inscriptions inside a Lute are usually written in ordinary characters, for the outside elegant and tasteful effects are aimed at. Here the scholar has every opportunity for displaying his refined taste and cultured penmanship. As a rule only the bottom board of a Lute is used for inscriptions, it being considered bad taste for the inscriptions to show when the Lute is lying on the table while being played.

First the inscriptions are written on the board with an ordinary writing brush, with very thick ink, usually red. When dried, the characters are cut out in the lacquer with a set of fine chisels, the same as used for engraving seals. The depth of the characters is left to individual taste: some like to engrave them deeply, going right through the coat till the wood is reached (*shên-k'o* 深刻), others prefer to cut away only the uppermost layers of the coat (*ch'ien-k'o* 淺刻). The carving should be done with considerable care, as the varnish easily bursts off, and the cement underneath is very brittle, and has a tendency to come off in



irregular lumps. Clever engravers, however, often utilize these peculiarities of the material for obtaining original effects: they choose archaic styles of writing, in which rough and irregular outlines are inherent. When the varnish crumbles off, the irregular contours obtained will lend the inscription an appearance of 'antique rusticity' (*ku-cho* 古拙), an effect much appreciated by connoisseurs (cf. ill. V).

When the characters have been cut out, they are filled up with white, red, or green paint, sometimes also with gold lacquer. But the latter process is considered too ostentatious to be in good taste.

The simplest type of Lute inscription is merely the name of the instrument, usually engraved above the Dragon Pond. Handbooks of the Lute give lists of various special names of Lutes, mostly borrowed from Lute ideology; I refer to p. 101 above.

Further the whole bottom board of the Lute is at the disposition of the amateur for engraving further inscriptions: lines of poetry, appreciative essays, classical quotations, impressions of seals, etc. Even the bottom of the two knobs for fastening the strings may be engraved with a seal or a few characters.

It goes without saying that these inscriptions furnish the connoisseur with abundant materials for exercising his discriminative powers: he must decide whether the dates tally, whether the contents of an inscription conform to the scholarly standards of the alleged writer, whether the style of the writing corresponds with that of other calligraphic specimens of the man who is asserted to have written the inscription, etc. But the appreciation of old Lutes necessitates much discretion and experience: numerous snares and pitfalls await the unwary outsider. If the cement of an antique Lute has been damaged badly, its owner will peel off the old coat, except those patches where the inscriptions are engraved: thereafter he covers the Lute with a new coating, of the same colour as the old one. Then the bewildered observer sees a Lute with all the marks of a genuine antique specimen, but with a brand new coat of lacquer. Again, a Lute amateur, having obtained a fine old specimen bearing no inscriptions, will decide that it resembles a Lute celebrated by some famous old writer. To enhance its beauty he composes an inscription for this Lute; then, glancing through rubbings of autographs of the said famous man of old till he has collected from various passages all the characters he needs for his inscription, he copies them out on the Lute. This method, known as *chi-tzû* 集字, though admittedly running counter to artistic principles, when expertly applied, often produces remarkable results. Yang Tsung-chi (see below) in his *T'sang-ch'ín-lu*

states several times openly that he added in this way inscriptions to some Lutes in his collection. The owner only means to make in this way an instrument more interesting for himself, but if the Lute changes hands, the danger exists that some unscrupulous dealer will try to pass off such an instrument as genuine.

A scholar without any real Lutes at his disposal may still make studies in this field, for there exist numerous rubbings (*t'a-pên* 拓本) taken from ancient instruments, which clearly show their shapes and inscriptions. Generally these rubbings only show the bottom board, but sometimes also copies of the other sides are added. Such rubbings may be traced again, and then a so-called *shuang-kou-pên* 雙鉤本 is obtained (cf. Th. F. Carter, *The invention of printing in China*, New York 1931, p. 12, and my book: *Mi Fu on Inkstones*, Peking 1938, p. 6 sq.)

After these preliminary remarks I shall discuss three antique Lutes ; the first and the last on the basis of photos of the originals, the second on the basis of a traced copy of the bottom board.

Those interested in further discussions of antique Lutes I may refer to the *Ts'ang-ch'in-lu* 藏琴錄, where Yang Tsung-chi 楊宗稹, a Lute master of Peking who died about ten years ago, gives detailed descriptions of 53 Lutes in his collection. The book is to be found in the *Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu*, being Yang Tsung-chi's complete works ; cf. Appendix II, no. 7:

\* \* \*

The first Lute to be discussed here, which is probably the oldest in the world, is preserved in Japan, in the Imperial Repository at Nara.

This Repository, the *Shōsōin* 正倉院, was built in 752, as the chief treasurehouse of the Tōdaiji, the famous old temple. A great number of objects used in the Imperial Family were in 756 deposited here, as votive gifts to the chief deity of the temple, the Buddha Vairocana. A propitious fate has spared this Repository from the calamities of nature and other vicissitudes, so that up to this day the collection may be seen in practically the same condition as it was more than 1200 years ago. Among these treasures this Lute is to be found.

Notwithstanding its considerable age, this instrument has been preserved in excellent condition. Although the strings are gone, its body is still intact, and when newly strung it can doubtless still be played. It was placed in the collection in 817 (the 8th year of Kōnin 弘仁 ; cf. *Shōsōin-gomotsu-danawake-mokuroku* 正倉院御物棚別目錄, No. 99). Having been left undisturbed for such a long period, this Lute constitutes a unique

object for the study of the Lute in general. Japanese scholars have carefully described the Shōsōin collection, and this Lute has received due attention (cf. the magnificent *Catalogue of the Imperial Treasures in the Shōsōin*, edited by J. Harada, Vol. II ; also *A glimpse of Japanese Ideals*, Tokyo 1937, by the same author, p. 120 sq.). But as the investigators were not sufficiently conversant with the study of the Lute to be in a position to recognize all the remarkable features of this instrument, and to settle satisfactorily the various problems it calls forth, I may be allowed here to discuss this Lute at some length.

This Lute is in the first place remarkable because of its decoration, which is entirely different from all antique Lutes which I had occasion to examine.

While antique Lutes, as a rule, show no other decoration than their inscriptions, this instrument is covered on all sides with intricate designs in inlaid gold and silver.

The upper board (see illustration VI) shows at the top a picture, enclosed by a lozenge-pattern border, all of inlaid gold (see illustration VII). In its centre a man is sitting beneath a blossoming tree ; leisurely reclining against an elbow-rest, he is playing a mandolin-like instrument, which by its round body with the broad band over it, may be identified as a *ch'in-p'i-p'a* 秦琵琶, a forerunner of the Japanese *biwa*. Before this figure a repast is laid out on a mat, while on his right an ewer is standing. In front of this central figure one sees two others, sitting on panther-hides: the left plays the Lute on his knees, while on his left side a low table with some book-rolls on it may be discerned. The figure on the right leans with his left arm on a wine-jar, while with his right hand he lifts a horn-shaped wine-cup to his lips. In front of these three figures a peacock is dancing, the remaining space being filled with trees, plants, rocks and birds. On the right and left upper corner there is depicted an immortal, riding on a Phoenix and bearing a standard, surrounded with a stylised cloud. Two similar genii are to be seen above the enclosure.

Under this enclosure a similar scene appears ; here the centre is again occupied by a blossoming tree, round which a creeper twines : a bird is perched on its top. To the left one sees a man playing the Lute on his knees, a wine jar with a spoon in it standing on his left. The figure on the right is lifting a cup to his lips, and a wine jar of different shape is standing by his side. In front of these two figures a pond is seen, with crabs, snakes and other water animals appearing in its waves. The waters of this pond cover the whole surface of the Lute, running downwards right to the end. Its banks run along the two sides of the Lute,

and show six human figures similar to those described above, three on either side ; they are sitting among flowering bushes and flying and resting birds. The two figures, the wave designs and the thirteen studs are of inlaid gold, the other designs are of silver.

Turning now to the bottom board (see illustration VIII) we find at the top again an enclosure, containing a poem of eight lines, four characters each, and arranged in four columns. This inscription, like the rest of the decoration of the bottom board, is in inlaid silver. It runs : 琴之在音, 盪滌邪 (i.e. 邪) 心, 雖有正性, 其感亦深, 存雅却鄭, 浮侈是禁, 條暢和正, 樂而不滯 (i.e. 淫), meaning : 'The significance of the Lute is to purify evil thoughts by its tones. Even if one's nature is good, it shall still be deeply influenced (by the music of the Lute). It preserves the accomplished music, and drives away the lewd songs of Chêng (the odes of Chêng and Wei 衛, book VII and IX of the *Shih-ching* 詩經, being ancient love songs, in Chinese literature are constantly used to denote lewd and vulgar music), restraining flightiness and extravagance. Its music is elevating, harmonious and correct. It brings enjoyment without being licentious'. This is a poem composed to be engraved on a Lute (ch'in-ming 琴銘) by Li Yu 李尤, a noted poet of the second century A.D. The inscription is quoted in full in a handbook for the Lute of the Ming period (*Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya* 青蓮舫琴雅, preface dated 1614, ch. 4), and in part in the huge collection of poetic reference, the *P'ei-wên-yün-fu* 佩文韻府, s.v. *chêng-hsing* 正性.

As further decoration the Dragon Pond is flanked on each side by a running dragon, which is intended as a reference to the name of this aperture. Similarly the Phoenix Pool is flanked by two Phoenixes, sitting on a flowering plant. Above and below the two holes there appears a flowermotif, and above the inscription on top stylised rocks are seen. I would especially draw attention to the *tuan-wên* of the type called in Lute terminology *ping-lieh*, 'cracked ice' (see above), which appear round the inscription, and round the Phoenix Pool.

The sides of the Lute are decorated with motifs of fabulous animals and flowers (see illustration IX).

Inside the Dragon Pond there is an inscription, unfortunately only partly legible, which runs : 清琴作兮□□日月, 幽人間兮□□□. The missing character in the first line is easily supplemented : it could hardly be anything else than 光, giving the meaning : 'The Lute of clear tones has been made oh !, brilliant like sun and moon'. As for the second part of the other line, however, I would not venture to reconstruct it. Inside the Phoenix Pool is written : 乙亥之年季春造, 'Made in the third month of



the year *i-hai*. As no definite period is indicated, it is impossible to say with absolute certainty for which year these two characters of the sexagenary cycle stand. J. Harada (*Catalogue*, English notes on plates in Vol. II) proposes 795 A.D., this being the nearest year *i-hai* preceding that in which the instrument is recorded as having been put in the collection (817). Thus this date is quite arbitrarily chosen. Below I shall try to establish the probable date of this Lute on sounder evidence.

For appreciating this Lute the first question which must be considered—a question which has been passed over in silence by Harada and other students—is whether this instrument was made in China or in Japan. I have come to the conclusion that it was made in China, for the following reasons. In the first place the study of the Chinese Lute was introduced into Japan at a fairly late date, i.e. in the middle of the 17th century, with the coming of the Chinese priest Hsin-yüeh (心越, Jap. Shin-etsu : for more details about his personality and the rôle he played in Japanese cultural life, cf. Appendix IV). This Lute in the Shōsōin, and some other old specimens dating from the T'ang period preserved in Japan, were doubtless brought over from China not to be actually played, but as curiosities, carefully preserved because the Japanese envoys noticed that in China this instrument was a revered symbol of culture (for a more detailed argument regarding this question cf. Appendix IV). That there lived at the Japanese Court someone who was so deeply initiated in the study of the Lute that he could build an instrument like this is highly improbable.

Secondly I would point out that the lacquer of Japanese made Lutes—such as those which were built later by the Japanese disciples of Hsin-yüeh—is of an entirely different constitution from that of Chinese Lutes : doubtless with a view to different climatic conditions, other substances were used in making this lacquer, which produces no tuan-wên. None of the many old Japanese made Lutes which I had occasion to examine show these typical cracks. Now the Lute under discussion does show tuan-wên, and, as observed above, tuan-wên of a clearly pronounced Chinese type.

Thirdly the technique of inlaid work used in the decoration is called in the 8th century inventory of the Shōsōin *hyōmon* 平文, 'flat pattern'. According to Harada this instrument is the sole example of this peculiar technique (*A Glimpe of Japanese Ideals*, p. 120). In China however, this technique was applied for decorating Lutes as early as the Han period, when it was called *yin-chi* 隱起 (see below, the quotation from the *Hsi-ching-tsa-chi*), so that this fact also tends to show that this Lute was made

in China, for else we could hardly expect that for the lacquer a technique would have been used which was unknown in Japan.

Having shown that this Lute was made in China, I shall next try to arrive at an opinion regarding its age.

In the first part of this article I said that since the beginning of our era the Lute has undergone practically no changes. But allowance must be made for the fact that literary evidence points to Lutes prior to the T'ang period having been adorned with various kinds of inlaid work; later they were left severely undecorated, their charm consisting in the tone of the lacquer, the tuan-wên, and the inscriptions engraved on it. This change must in my opinion be ascribed to two reasons, first, the technique of playing, and second, artistic considerations. The finger technique of the Lute in course of time grew more and more involved. To execute the delicate movements of the left hand, a perfectly smooth and even surface is necessary. Richly inlaid Lutes, no matter of how good the workmanship, are liable, in course of time, to show slight depressions and protuberances, which entirely spoil the tone of a string pressed down on those spots. As to artistic considerations, I may observe that during the T'ang dynasty, when the gorgeous art of India and Central Asia was flourishing in China, there is noticeable a tendency to return to more austere styles, an inclination to return to purely Chinese classical models. This tendency implies a preference for simple and natural beauty rather than artificial effects, for the invisible rather than the obvious. Later, during the Sung period (960-1279), this artistic current reached its summit in the paintings of the so-called Southern School.

Thus all Lutes of the T'ang dynasty that have been preserved show no decorations. And when a scholar of the Sung dynasty, Ho Yüan (何遜, 11th century) embodied in his *Ch'un-chu-chi-wên* (春渚紀聞, paragraph Ku-ch'in-p'in-shih 古琴品飾, 汲古閣 edition ch. 8, p. 2) a discussion of old Lutes, he found it necessary to draw attention to old texts referring to decorated Lutes, implying that in his time such Lutes were no longer to be seen.

During the Han dynasty, however, it appears that Lutes were occasionally lavishly decorated. The *Hsi-ching-tsa-chi* 西京雜記, written by Liu Hsin (劉歆, died 23 A.D.) says: 'The Empress Chao possessed a valuable Lute, which bore the name Fêng-huang; it was entirely covered with figures of dragons and phoenixes, sages of antiquity and famous women, in a flat relief of inlaid gold and jade' (ch. V, 3d heading: 趙后有寶琴曰鳳凰, 皆以金玉隱起爲龍鳳古賢列女之象). Further we read in the famous poetical essay on the Lute *Ch'in-fu* (琴賦, cf. *Wên-hsüan* 文選, ch. 18),

written by Hsi K'ang (嵇康, 223-262) : '(The Lute) is painted with the five colours, decorated with chased work, covered with designs and various patterns, inlaid with rhinoceros horn and ivory, marked with blue and green ; its strings are made of five-coloured silk, its studs of jade of the Chung mountain, it shows figures of dragons and phoenixes, and of famous men of antiquity' (華繪彫琢, 布藻垂文, 錯以犀象, 籍以翠綠, 絃以園客人絲, 徽以鍾山之玉, 爰有龍鳳之象, 古人之形).

Now the Shōsōin Lute serves as an illustration of such descriptions : it is decorated with flat inlaid work, showing dragons and phoenixes, and the figures of ancient worthies. Therefore I am inclined to consider this Lute as being anterior to the T'ang period, and ascribe it to, perhaps, the latter part of the Six Dynasties (220-588 A.D.). In China also in former dynasties old Lutes were preferred to new ones ; therefore it is unlikely that the Japanese envoys brought from China a brand-new specimen, and far more reasonable that they procured a specimen that was already antique in the T'ang period. A study of the design of the upper board, however, enables us to narrow down the date further.

This design has not been sufficiently analysed by Japanese scholars. J. Harada confined himself to a summary description (cf. Catalogue, English notes to the plates of vol. II). A. Matsuoka (*Sacred Treasures of Nara*, Tokyo 1935, p. 17) tries to identify the figures in the enclosure, and claims that they represent the old story of the great Lute player Po-tzû-ya<sup>2)</sup> (cf. Lieh-tzû 列子, ch. T'ang-wên 湯問, and various other Chinese sources mentioned above). Po-tzû-ya 伯子牙 found in his friend Chung-tzû-ch'i 鍾子期 the only kindred soul that could understand his music ; when the latter died, Po-tzû-ya broke his Lute, and never touched the strings again, because no one else in the world could understand his playing. Of course this identification is entirely mistaken : firstly three persons are seen, and not two, and moreover the third, who occupies the place of honour, plays the p'i-p'a, an instrument definitely belonging to popular music, and incompatible with one of the most revered Lute masters of antiquity. And secondly we can hardly imagine Po-tzû-ya playing his beloved instrument while one of his hearers thrums a sort

2) The authoress refers to them as Hakuga and Shōshiki, the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese names. In this connection I would protest against this distressing habit that many Japanese and also foreign (cf. the very pertinent remarks by L. Giles, in : *Sun Tzu on the Art of War*, London 1910, p. VIII) authors have of giving purely Chinese names only in the Japanese pronunciation, when writing in a western language. This method is highly objectionable, because it confuses the unwary reader by giving him the impression that Japanese persons or objects are meant. It is to be hoped that this indiscriminate use of Japanese readings will be abandoned.

of guitar, and the other drinks deeply from a capacious goblet.

None of the previous students of this matter has realized that the upper board must be viewed as one single picture, lengthened to suit the shape of the Lute. There is a pond, or maybe a rivulet, located in a beautiful scene of nature, on the banks of which are assembled a literary company, engaged in cultural pastimes: playing various musical instruments, wine games, composing poetry or appreciating calligraphies (see the book rolls mentioned above), etc. Such representations of literary gatherings by the waterside abound in Chinese art. Especially famous are pictures representing the literary gathering at the Lan Pavilion. This occasion was immortalized by the *Lan-t'ing-hsü* (蘭亭序, to be found in nearly all *Ku-wên* 古文 collections; translated in various languages, lately by Lin Yutang, in: *The Importance of Living*, New York 1937, p. 156), an essay by Wang Hsi-chih (王羲之, 321-379), the paragon of Chinese calligraphers. In the spring of the year 353 several men of letters met at the Lan Pavilion in order to celebrate the performance of the Vernal Purification ceremony (hsiu-hsi 修禊). They seated themselves along the water side, and played the literary game of the 'floating cups' (liu-shang 流觴): cups were placed on lotus leaves floating on the water, and when such a drifting leaf touched the bank on the spot where one of the guests was sitting, he had to empty the cup and to compose a poem. Wang Hsi-chih collected the compositions made by his friends on this occasion, and added a prefatory essay, the *Lan-t'ing-hsü*. It is this essay that became a celebrated model both for literary composition and for calligraphy. Though some scholars doubt its authenticity, it has been copied and carved in stone numerous times, together with a picture of the gathering. This essay and its accompanying picture became so famous indeed, that already in early times it was a much-used motif for the decoration of objects connected with literary life: one finds it carved on the top of an antique writing desk, engraved on the reverse of an inkstone. So wide was its use, that in the 19th century it was even used to form the background of a receipt blank of a Bank at Peking! (cf. Britton, on a horn stamp for receipt blanks, in: *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. III, No. 2). Reproductions of good rubbings representing the text and the picture are to be found in the special *Lan-t'ing* number of the Japanese periodical *Sho-en* (書苑, Vol. II, no. 4, Tokyo 1938). Though greatly varying in detail, in their main lines these pictorial representations are always the same: one sees the pavilion by the waterside, surrounded by an ideal scenery. A brook is winding itself among gnarled trees, quaintly shaped rocks, and flowering shrubbery. Under rustling bam-



boos the guests are seated on mats and panther hides alongside the water, while attendants are running to and fro with wine jars and writing implements.

The resemblance with the scene depicted on the Lute is obvious. There can be no doubt that the designer had in mind a representation of the Lan-t'ing Gathering when he made this decoration. Some details, as the floating wine-cups were left out, but others, like the panther hides on which the guests are sitting, scrolls, wine-jars etc., are faithfully reproduced. The Lan-t'ing motif being a favourite decoration for all things connected with literary life, it is only natural that it was chosen also for the decoration of a Lute. The musical element was stressed by adding the Lutes and the p'i-p'a ; at a literary gathering old tunes are played on the Lute, while the p'i-p'a is used for lighter music.

But this motif of the literary gathering does not explain why three figures are set apart in the enclosure, nor does it explain the dominant position of the tree, and the genii floating in the air. These elements, and especially the arrangement of the picture, suggest an entirely different, un-Chinese subject, viz. a Buddhist representation of the Enlightened One, or of one of the deities of the Mahayanic Pantheon. As in such Buddhist representations, here also we find in the foreground a pond, only the lotus flowers are missing to make the resemblance complete. Then on a second plane some minor figures, and finally on the highest plane the chief figure, set apart on a throne—here indicated by the enclosure—the whole placed in paradisaical surroundings. Viewed in this light, all seeming incongruities fall automatically in their right places. The blossoming tree which figures so prominently is the Wish-granting Tree, the Kalpadruma of Indian mythology, which constitutes a regular feature of Buddhist representations, it being identified with the Bodhi tree, under which Buddha received enlightenment. The phoenix perched on top is the fabulous bird Garuda, closely connected with the Kalpadruma. The two genii in the upper corner are the indispensable attendants of every Mahayanic deity. The dancing peacock (Chinese Lute ideology presupposes a dancing crane, *wu-ho* 舞鶴, constantly mentioned in connection with the Lute player : cf. above, ch. VI section 1) concludes the Indian element of this representation.

Thus it appears that the artist wavered between two different concepts, a purely Chinese one, that of the Literary Gathering, and a foreign one, that of a Buddhist picture. Setting to work, he resolved to combine both.

When we now ask ourselves which period in Chinese history could

be expected to produce such a dual representation, we immediately think of the Northern Wei period (Pei-wei 北魏 386-535). Under the rulers of this outlandish dynasty, who were fervent Buddhists, Buddhist art reigned supreme, and talented artists, combining Greco-Indian elements with Chinese styles, created works of art, the magnificence of which is attested by such archeological sites as Yün-kang and Lung-men.

The style of the calligraphy, as shown in the inscription on the bottom board (see illustration X) confirms this date: when compared with the style of writing as seen on monuments of the Wei period (see illustration XI; the characters are traced after reproductions in Shodō-zenshū 書道全集, Vol. VII), the similarity is obvious.

On the basis of the above considerations I think we may assume with some confidence that the cyclic characters *i-hai* stand for a year of the Wei period, say 435 or 495. Thus this Lute was in the T'ang period already a rare treasure, a suitable object to be offered to the Japanese Imperial Court.

To all appearances this rare instrument is the oldest Lute still extant, a unique document both for the study of Chinese art, and for the study of the Lute.

\* \* \*

K'un-shan-yü, the second Lute to be discussed here, is, according to authoritative Chinese opinion, one of the finest old instruments in existence. Notwithstanding its early date (T'ang period), it has been preserved in perfect condition, and has a remarkably fine tone.

I regret that I can only show here a traced copy of a rubbing of the bottom of this Lute (see illustration XII and XIII). As it is doubtful, however, whether at the time when I am writing this essay this rare Lute is still extant, and as moreover it is connected with one of the most remarkable Lute masters of present-day China, I may be allowed to include it in this essay.

This Lute was the favourite instrument of Yeh Ho-fu, since the beginning of this century the greatest Lute master in Peking.

Yeh Ho-fu (葉鶴伏, named Ch'ien 潛) was born in 1863 as the third son of a high Manchu official, Grand Secretary Jui Lin (瑞麟, cf. his biography in *Ch'ing-shih-lieh-chuan* 清史列傳, ch. 46). Jui Lin is well-known in history because in 1860 he was the commander of the Manchu forces that fought the British and the French in the battle of Pa-li-chiao. Yeh Ho-fu's elder brother Huai Ta-pu was an ultra-reactionary, who played an important rôle during the Boxer troubles (cf. Bland & Backhouse, *China under the Empress Dowager*, p. 130, 137, 141). It would seem,

however, that Yeh Ho-fu did not sympathize with the political attitude of his near relatives, and sided more with the reform party: he was keenly interested in western science, and would talk with animation of the time when he was in charge of installing an electric plant in the Palace grounds. Up to the establishment of the Chinese Republic he occupied several administrative functions, and was well-known for his scholarly tastes. His mansion in Peking, where he had collected many choice antiques and a fine library, was frequented by prominent literati and statesmen of the time, as for instance the two leaders of the progressive southern party at the Court, Wêng T'ung-ho (翁同龢, 1830-1904) and P'an Tsu-yin (潘祖蔭, 1830-1890). Up to the end of the 19th century his house flourished; it was only with the Boxer uprising of 1900 that the decline started: during the troubles the greater part of his property was destroyed, and his political position weakened. In 1910 he lost his official position, and was reduced to utter poverty. It was then that he could convert a hobby into a means of support. Since his early youth he had been a lover of music: as a boy already, when his father was an official in South China, Yeh Ho-fu commenced studying the Lute under the well-known master Liu Jung-chai (劉蓉齋, from Chekiang). He assiduously kept up this study, and in later years was taught by other Lute masters of established fame, as for instance Chu Fêng-chieh (author of the *Yü-ku-chai-ch'in-pu* mentioned above), the Taoist Chang Ho (張鶴, style Ching-hsiang 靜菴, author of the standard introductory handbook for the Lute player, the *Ch'in-hsüeh-ju-mên*, cf. App. II, no. 18), the Ch'an priest K'ung Ch'ên (空塵, author of the Lute handbook *K'u-mu-ch'an-ch'in-pu* 枯木禪琴譜, published 1893), Li Hsiang-shih 李湘石 from Chekiang, and others. When the political changes had deprived him of his official income, and his private means had dwindled to nothing, he moved to a small house near Lung-fu-szû, and earned his living by teaching the Lute.

In the autumn of 1936, one year before his death, I had the privilege of studying the Lute under his guidance. Yeh Ho-fu was a personification of the noblest traditions of the old-fashioned Chinese literatus: never rebelling against the fate which had deprived him of nearly everything, he lived quietly on in an enviable equanimity, enjoying playing the Lute and composing poetry. His personality may be characterized by a quotation from Mencius, Book III, part II, 2: '... not extravagant when rich and honoured, not forsaking his principles when poor and in a mean condition ... that constitutes the great man' 富貴不能淫, 貧賤不能移.... 此之謂大丈夫.

Often I heard Yeh Ho-fu play on the K'un-shan-yü, his favourite

Lute, and on more than one occasion I heard him praise its superior qualities. At that time, however, I had no opportunity to copy its inscriptions. And when in 1937 I again visited Peking, the master had died—just one month before my arrival. As he left no sons, his scanty belongings were scattered, and among those also his Lutes. No one could inform me as to the whereabouts of the Lute K'un-shan-yü. So I gave up all hope for studying this unique instrument more closely, and only retained the memory of its exquisite tones, its interesting *tuán-wên* (of the type Serpent belly), and its beautiful greenish patina. But a lucky accident came to my aid: when I got back to Tokyo, I found in the collection of *R. Taki* 瀧達一, a Japanese musicologist, who had visited Peking some years previously, a rubbing of the bottom board of this Lute. The rubbing being badly done, the inscriptions were hardly legible (see illustration XII); having studied it carefully during many evenings, I finally succeeded in deciphering all of it, except the legend of one seal. Then I made a tracing after this rubbing, which is reproduced here (see illustration XIII and XIV).

The name K'un-shan-yü 崑山玉 appears at the top, three characters in chancery script (li-shu 隸書): 'Jade from the K'un-lun mountains'. The best jade coming reputedly from the K'un-lun slopes, long associated with Taoist lore, this name indicates value and rarity.

Underneath, on either side of the Dragon Pond, two lines of poetry are engraved. They extol the rare qualities of this Lute: 'Its accomplished tones of clear profundity sing like tinkling girdle ornaments of jade; excellent material of high purity comes from the K'un-lun mountains' 雅韻清幽鳴玉珮, 良材高潔發崑岡.

These lines of poetry, together with the three characters at the top, formed the original inscription of this Lute, as attested by the lowest inscription. They were perhaps written by the great literatus Li Yung (李邕, style T'ai-ho 泰和, literary name Pei-hai 北海, 678-747). I have compared their style with specimens of Li Yung's handwriting as reproduced in Vol. X of the Japanese collection *Shodō-zenshū* (see above), and find them indeed very similar.

The inscription in cursive script (ts'ao-shu 草書) was written by one of the most famous Lute players of the early Ch'ing period, Chou Lu-fêng (周魯封, style: Tzû-an 子安, co-editor of one of the Chinese standard handbooks of the Lute, the *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu* 五知齋琴譜, preface dated 1721). It does not say where Chou Lu-fêng obtained this Lute, but only praises its high qualities. The inscription might be translated: 'The material of this Lute was reared on the southern slopes of the I



mountain ; it obtained its fragrance by the side of the Hsien Pond. Vague and vagrant, its tones are remote like high mountains and flowing streams' 毓質于嶧山之陽，尋芳于咸池之側，蓬然與高山流水俱兮。

This text consists entirely of allusions to the tenets of ch'in ideology. As regards the I-shan (a mountain in Shantung province), according to tradition the mythical Emperor Fu-hsi gathered there the wood for building the first Lute. Hsien-ch'ih, lit. Hsien Pond, is the name of the music attributed to the mythical Emperor Yao. Kao-shan-liu-shui, high mountains and flowing streams, is the name of a famous Lute tune, ascribed to the ancient Lute player Po-tzu-ya (cf. above, ch. IV).

At the end of this inscription there is engraved an impression of a seal with the style of Chou Lu-fêng: *Tzu-an-fu* (子安父; *fu* 父 in this case is the same as *fu* 甫, meaning: styled). In the middle there is a fine large seal, reading: *Chou-lu-fêng chia-ts'ang* 周魯封家藏, 'Preserved in the family of Chou Lu-fêng.'

The smaller seal to the left of this large seal is unfortunately illegible: apparently it is the seal of another owner of this Lute, for I have succeeded in deciphering the penultimate character *chên* 珍: presumably the last two characters read *chên-ts'ang* 珍藏, 'treasured and stored away by . . .'. The small square seal to the right reads: *Hsi-shih-chih-pao* 希世之寶, 'A treasure rarely found in this world.'

The two white spots under these three seals indicate the holes for the two knobs to which the strings are fastened.

The lowest inscription (see illustration XIV), which is engraved in small regular style (*hsiao-kai* 小楷), on either side of the Phoenix Pool, is signed with the seal of the Ch'ing literatus Ching Chi-chün 景其潛; it says: 'This Lute was hewn during the T'ang dynasty, and in the Sung period its left and right bridges (*lung-yin* and *yo-shan*, see above) were renewed. Its tones are extremely clear. The *li*-inscription, and the two lines of poetry thereunder, resemble the handwriting of Li Yung (see above). The appreciative commentary to be seen above was written by Chou Lu-fêng, a Lute player of the beginning of our dynasty. When in the autumn of the year 1857 I obtained this Lute, I could hardly control myself for joy, and wrote the foregoing to commemorate the occasion' 此琴唐斲宋嵌，音韻清絕，隸與詩句似李北海手筆，周魯封爲國朝初琴家，其賞識可知矣，余得自丁巳秋日喜不自勝，因識之。 The word *ch'ien* 嵌 in the first line of this inscription generally means 'to inlay, to inchase'; but in handbooks of the Lute it is used as a technical term, and indicates the process of adding the two bridges to either end of the body of the Lute. For these bridges a specially hard kind of wood, like ebony or red sandalwood,

is used (cf. *Yü-ku-chai-ch'in-pu*, Ch. II, p. 37).

The round seal in archaic script underneath imitates the well-worn legend on ancient sacrificial vessels: *tsü-sun-yung-pao* 子孫永寶, 'May my children and grand children treasure it for ever'.

When Yeh Ho-fu obtained this Lute, he added on either side of the three characters K'un-shan-yü an inscription of his own, saying: 'This is the best of all the Lutes preserved in the Shih-mêng Library' 詩夢齋所藏之琴此爲第一. Shih-mêng-chai was the name of Yeh Ho-fu's studio.

On my tracing, reproduced here, I added in the upper right corner an impression of Yeh Ho-fu's library seal, reading: *Shih-mêng-chai* 詩夢齋. The seal in the lower right corner is that of my own library, reading *Chung-ho-ch'in-shih* 中和琴室, cut in imitation of the seal of the Ming Prince Chu Ch'üan (see below). I also added on the left a colophon, relating the history of this tracing.

\* \* \*

The third Lute brings us to the Ming dynasty.

After China had been dominated for the greater part of a century by foreign rulers, with the coming of the House of Ming the country again enjoyed a Chinese dynasty. During this period (1368-1644) the fine arts flourished, protected and encouraged by Imperial favour. Next to the Emperors themselves, there were also several Imperial Princes who were ardent patrons of art and learning. Not less than fifteen Princes are enumerated as having patronized book printing, and some of the superior editions which they had made are still preserved (cf. *Shu-lin-ch'ing-hua* 書林清話, ed. 1920, ch. 5). Also in artistic studies there was a great activity. Endeavours were made to bring about a renaissance of the old classical music: here also the most outstanding name is that of a member of the Imperial Family, Prince Chu Tsai-yü 朱載堉, whose works on music, as for example the *Yüeh-lü-ch'üan-shu* (樂律全書, cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 38, p. 5) are still considered authoritative. And it was also Court circles that gave the impetus to the florescence of Lute studies and Lute music which was witnessed in the Ming period.

Four Princes are known as having been especially interested in the Lute: the Princes of Ning (Ning-wang 寧王), of Lu (Lu-wang 潯王), of I (I-wang 益王), and of Hêng (Hêng-wang 衡王). Cf. *Ts'ang-ch'in-lu*, quoted above.

Prince Ning, personal name Chu Ch'üan (朱權, died 1448) was typical for his class and his time: deeply interested in artistic and abstruse subjects, not caring much for worldly things, he preferred to pass his days in cultivated leisure. He published books on history (*Han-t'ang-pi-*

*shih* 漢唐秘史, cf. Imperial Catalogue, ch. 52, p. 9), on Taoism (*K'eng-shin-yü-ts'ê* 庚辛玉冊, cf. Bibliographical Section of the *Ming-shih* 明史), on agriculture (*Shên-yin-shu* 神隱書, ibidem), on geography (*I-yü-chih* 異域志, ibidem, ch. II), on medicine (*P'ing-chi-ch'i-i-pao-ming-chi* 病機氣宜保命集, cf. the catalogue *T'ieh-ch'in-t'ung-chien-lou-ts'ang-shu-mu-lu* 鐵琴銅劍樓藏書目錄, publ. 1897, ch. 14, p. 24), on the calendar *Chou-hou-shên-ching* (肘後神經, cf. Imperial Catalogue ch. 111, p. 11; the *Ming-shih* gives *shu* 樞 instead of *ching* 經), on literary games, etc.

Under his literary name *Ch'ü-hsien* (騷仙, 'Emaciated Immortal', i.e. crane) he was famous as a Lute master; he is credited with having composed two well-known tunes, 'Autumn Geese' *Ch'iu-hung* 秋鴻, and 'Geese on the Sandbank' *P'ing-sha-lo-yen* 平沙落雁, which are still played to this day. A collection of Lute tunes compiled by him, the *Shên-chi-pi-pu* (cf. App. II, no. 10) is still preserved. Other works on the Lute written by the Prince, like the *T'ai-ku-i-yin* 太古遺音 and the *Ch'in-yüan-ch'i-mêng* (琴阮啓蒙, cf. Bibliogr. Section, ch. III), seem to have been lost; some fragments are to be found in the *Tsun-shêng-pa-chien* (cf. App. II, no. 4). Next to being an expert performer, the Prince was also well-known as a builder of Lutes; unfortunately specimens of his work are extremely rare. When accused of practising black magic (*wu-ku* 巫蠱), the Prince retired to a mountain top, and passed his further days composing poetry and playing the Lute (cf. *Ming-shih*, ch. 117; *Ming-shih-tsung* 明詩綜, ch. 1).

I could find less details about the other three Princes who are constantly quoted in connection with the study of the Lute; but we shall not be far amiss when we assume that they were personalities not unlike the Prince of Ning.

The Prince of Lu is especially known as a builder of Lutes. Specimens of instruments built at Hangchow by him or under his direct supervision are often met with in Chinese collections; most bear dates of the Ch'ung-chên period (崇禎, 1628-1644).

Further, Lutes made by the Prince of I still exist in a fair number; one dated 1564 is recorded (cf. *T'ien-wên-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'êng*, App. II, no. 17, vol. I, sub *Shou-lu* 手錄), and one good specimen has been preserved in Japan, brought over from China by the Chinese refugee Chu Shun-shui (cf. App. IV); the bottom-board is reproduced on ill. XVI.

The Prince of Hêng, next to being a great bibliophile (cf. *Ts'ang-shu-chi-shih-shih* 藏書記事詩, publ. 1891, ch. 2, p. 18), was a famous Lute amateur. As far as I know, he did not compose new melodies, but in-

struments built by him are counted among the finest specimens produced during the Ming period. While instruments built by the Princes of Lu and I may occasionally be seen, Lutes built by the Princes of Ning and Hêng are very rare, and highly valued by connoisseurs. It is an instrument made by the Prince of Hêng that is reproduced here (see illustration XV).

The name of this Lute is *Lung-yin-ch'iu-shui* 龍吟秋水, 'Dragon crying in the autumnal water': the four characters in archaic style are to be seen at the top.

On the right and left of the Dragon Pond there appears a poetical essay in chancery script, praising the qualities of the instrument, and explaining its name: 'With one leap the Dragon reaches the gates of Heaven; as a stormwind he compasses ten thousand miles in his flight. When he shakes his bristles, thunder and lightning roll and rattle; when he spurts his foam, a rainstorm gathers. Trying to express in an image the tones produced by the supreme Reason of the movement of the atmosphere, and by music and dance in their various manifestations, I at last lit upon a dragon crying in the autumnal waters' 一躍天門，罡飈萬里，振鬣兮雷電繼 (better: 繼) 轟，歎沫兮風雲際會，鼓舞造化，橐籥至理，爰取物以喻音，若龍吟於秋水。 The first part of these lines is descriptive: since ancient times the dragon has been connected with storms and rain (cf. M. W. de Visser, *The Dragon in China and Japan*, Amsterdam 1913, ch. V). The second part explains why such a seemingly incongruous image as a dragon was chosen in connection with the tones of this Lute: the maker meant to express in this name the impressive, super-human harmony of the universe. The term *t'o-yüeh* 橐籥, which I have translated as movement of the atmosphere, literally means a bellows: it is a quotation from the *Tao-tê-ching* 道德經, ch. V: '(The space) between heaven and earth is like a bellows'. The term *tsao-hua* 造化 is also difficult to translate: it means natural evolution, as it is produced by the agency of the eternal cosmic forces.

Directly under the Dragon Pond one sees the beautiful square seal that marks all instruments of the Prince. It reads: *Hêng-fan-ho-chai-chia-chih* 衡藩和齋佳製 'Superior product of the Ho Studio, in the Hêng fief'.

\* \* \*

The above may suffice to give an idea of what antique Lutes mean to the Chinese connoisseur, and what methods are followed for appreciating them.

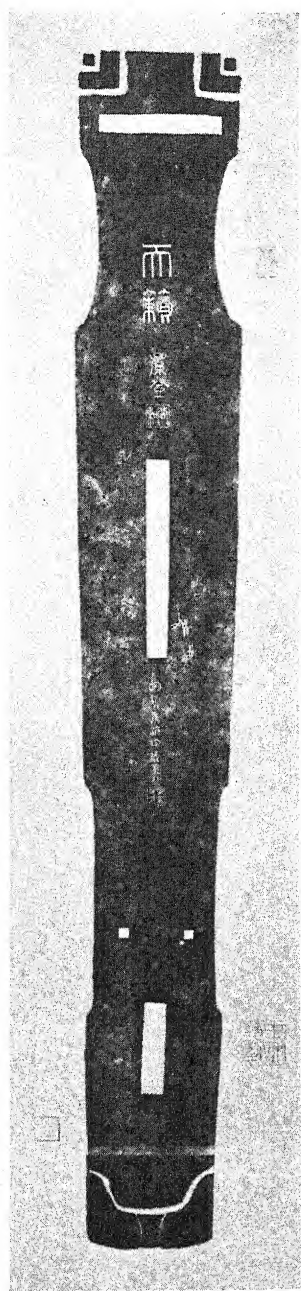
It must be stressed again, however, that the Lute should not be con-

sidered as a mere relic of bygone times. It does not primarily belong to the scholar's library, but to the pavilion in his garden, to the rivulets in secluded valleys, to the gnarled pines on the rocks. The Lute is one of the many bonds that keep the literatus, notwithstanding his book learning, united with the cosmic forces of living nature.

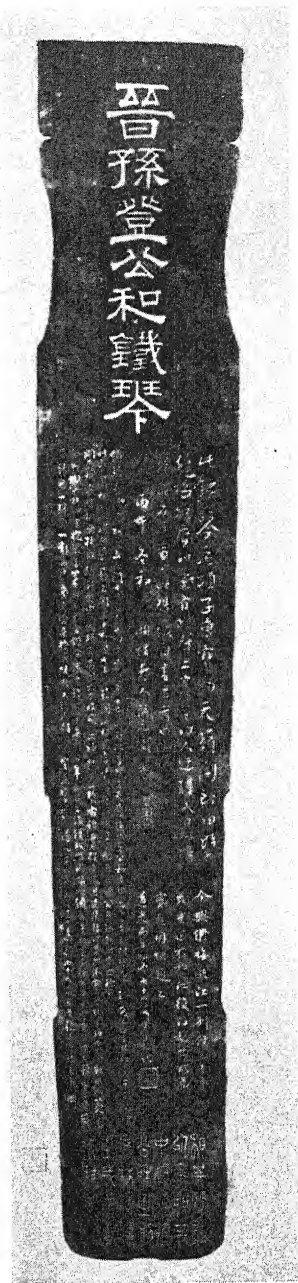
## List of Plates

- Plate I. Rubbing of the Lute *T'ien-lai*, that belonged to the Ming scholar Hsiang Yüan-pien. On top the name of the Lute, then the name Sun Têng, and his style Kung-ho in a square seal. Under the Dragon Pond the inscription: 明項元汴珍藏 "Treasured and preserved by Hsiang Yüan-pien, of the Ming dynasty." Underneath two square seals, reading Mo-lin 墨林, a literary name of Hsiang. Finally another square seal, reading 子京甫印, Tzû-ching being Hsiang's style. (Author's collection)
- Plate II. Rubbing of an iron Lute of the Chin period. (Author's collection)
- Plate III. Upper board.
- Plate IV. Bottom board.
- Plate V. Impression of a seal, engraved in the bottom board. Han-chang-t'ang-chi 含章堂記. (After a Lute in the author's collection.)
- Plate VI. Shōsōin Lute: the upper board. After the photo in Harada's Catalogue.
- Plate VII. Shōsōin Lute: the enclosure on the upper board. After the photo in Harada's Catalogue.
- Plate VIII. Shōsōin Lute: the bottom board. After the photo in Harada's Catalogue.
- Plate IX. Shōsōin Lute: side aspects. After the photo in Harada's Catalogue.
- Plate X. Inscription on Shōsōin Lute.
- Plate XI. Characters from Wei-inscriptions.
- Plate XII. Rubbing of the bottom board of the Lute of Yeh Ho-fu.
- Plate XIII. Tracing after the rubbing reproduced in Plate XII.
- Plate XIV. Lower part of the tracing.
- Plate XV. Bottom board of the Lute made by the Prince of Hêng. (Collection of Cheng Ying-sun, Peking)
- Plate XVI. Bottom board of a Lute made by the Prince of I, preserved in Japan. Name: *Shuang-t'ien-ling-to* 霜天鈴鐸 "Bells on a frosty day". The round seal reads: *I-fan-ya-chih* 益藩雅制 "Elegant product of the I fief"; the large square seal has the legend *yu-ch'êng-yang-tê* 游誠養德 "rejoicing in sincerity, nurturing virtue". The grass-characters on either side of the Dragon Pond read 脆滑輕鬆 搖霜天之鈴鐸, 翕純淑繹詠盛世之唐虞 "Crisp, gliding, light and loose, its tones tinkle like bells on a frosty day; harmonious and pure, it sings the golden age of Yao and Shun".

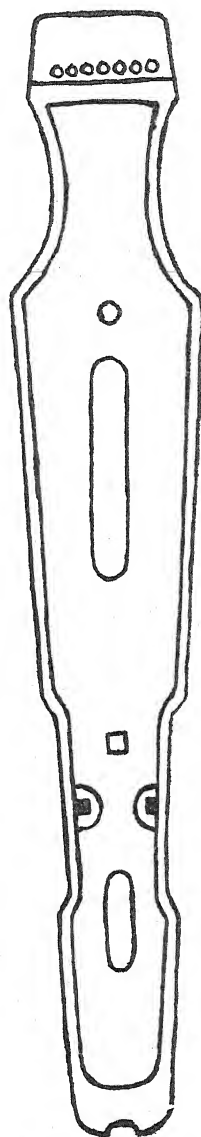




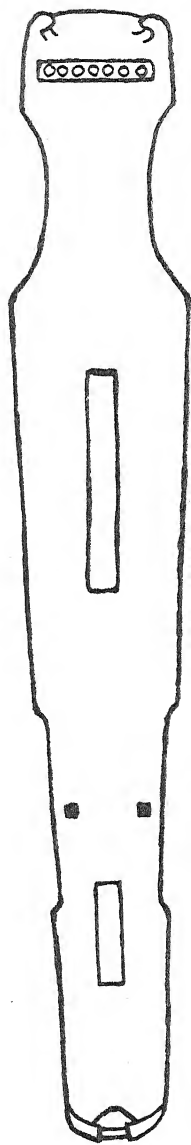
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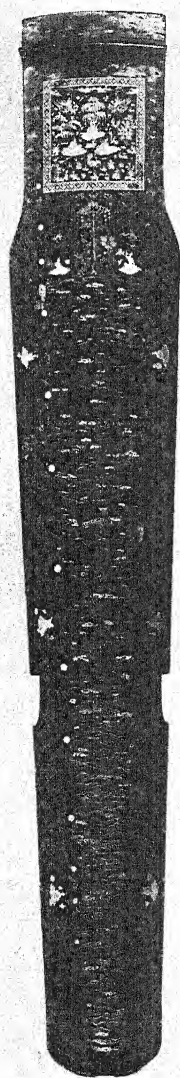


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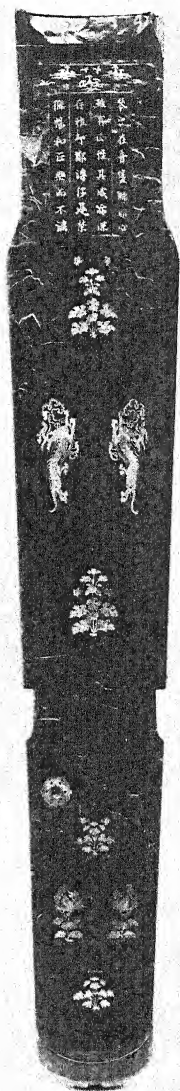


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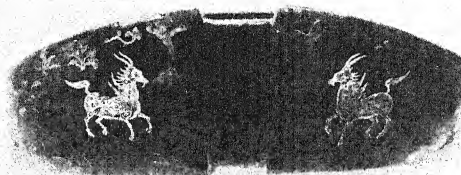
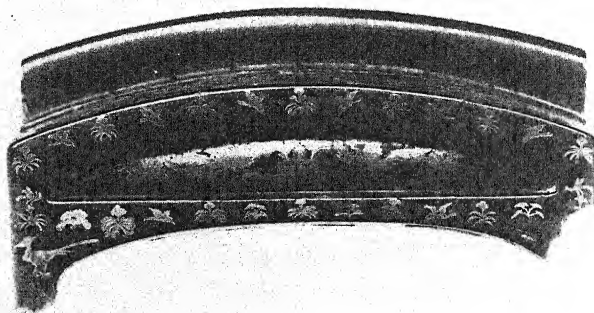
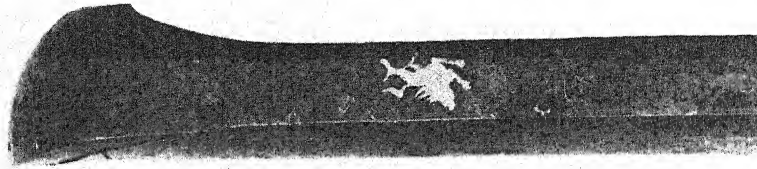
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VIII







IX

<p>             條 暢 和 正 樂 而 不 謠         </p>	<p>             存 雅 却 鄭 濤 侈 是 禁         </p>	<p>             雖 有 正 性 其 感 亦 深         </p>	<p>             琴 之 在 音 盪 滌 耶 心         </p>
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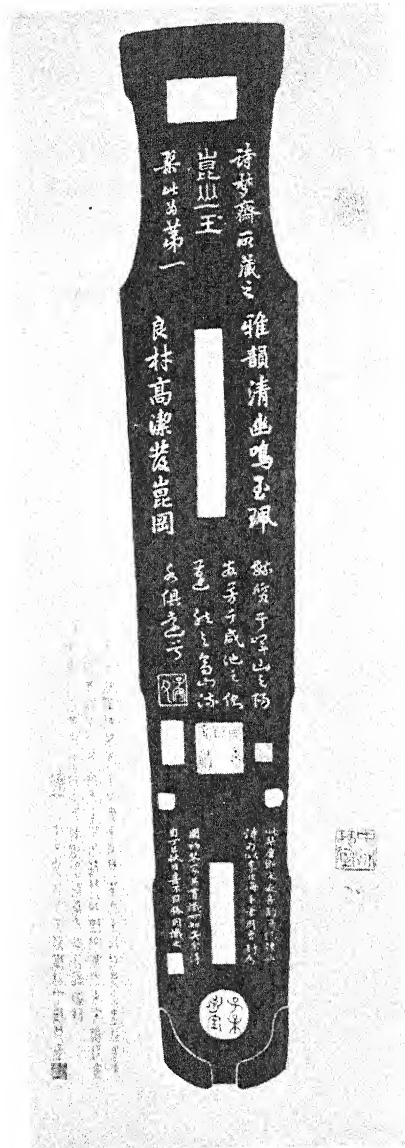
X

音	鄭	盪
滌	之	雅

XI



XII



XIII

跡質于山也  
 友芳于成他之  
 意然之高山流  
 永俱志兮



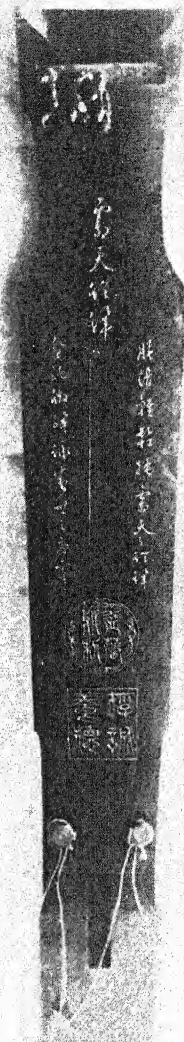
此琴唐新宋故音韻清絕疎興  
 詩力似李北海手筆周書封為  
 國初琴瑟其賞識可知矣余得  
 自丁秋日喜不自勝同識之



琴瑟之為物也  
 其聲清越而  
 其質堅固  
 故君子必  
 先其德而  
 後其樂  
 此琴之為  
 物也  
 其聲清越而  
 其質堅固  
 故君子必  
 先其德而  
 後其樂  
 此琴之為  
 物也



XV



XVI



## APPENDIX IV

### THE CHINESE LUTE IN JAPAN

According to most Japanese sources the flourishing of the study of the Chinese Lute in Japan (*kingaku* 琴學) in the 17th, 18th and 19th century is due to the arrival in Japan, in 1677, of the Chinese Zen priest Hsin-yüeh (心越 Jap. Shin-etsu). This Chinese priest, who came to Japan as a refugee, fleeing the troubles that marked the later years of the Ming dynasty, was a great lover of the Lute ; when he came to Japan he brought several Chinese Lutes with him, and propagated the study of the Lute in that country.

The problem is whether or not the Chinese Lute was played in Japan already before the arrival of Shin-etsu. Both old and new Japanese authors disagree in their attitude to this question.

Music since olden times occupied an important place in Japanese cultural life. Old Japanese literature abounds in references to several kinds of musical instruments, that were played in Court circles, and by all those who claimed to have elegant and refined interests. Among these several stringed instruments are mentioned ; some of these are Japanese, others are of foreign origin. One reads about the *wagon* or *yamato-goto* (和琴, a six-stringed cither, each string supported by a strut, *jū* 柱), the *sō* 箏 (a 13 stringed cither, a Japanese adaptation of the Chinese *chêng* 箏), the *Shiragi-koto* (新羅琴, a cither, as the name implies, of Korean origin), etc. On the other hand most often we find simply the character 琴, read in Sino-Japanese : *kin*, and in Japanese : *koto*, without further indication of what instrument is meant. The pronunciation added in Japanese *kana* to this character in the texts is *kin* or *koto* ; sometimes the Chinese character is not used, and we find *kin* or *koto* in *kana* only ; sometimes also we find expressions like *kin no koto*, etc. The problem is whether there are passages where the context shows that with one of these terms the seven-stringed Chinese Lute is meant.

I may start with giving a few examples, taken at random from the vast field of Japanese literature.

The *Montoku-jitsuroku* (文德實錄, historical notes written in Chinese, and covering the period 850-858 ; completed in 878) mentions under the year 853 that a courtier called Sekio excelled in playing the *kin* :

"Sekio especially loved to play the *kin*, and the Emperor presented him with a secret handbook (for this instrument)" 關雎尤好鼓琴，天皇賜其秘譜。 Similar references are to be found in the *Zoku-nihon-kōki* (續日本後記 a chronicle, written in Chinese, covering the period 833-850), the *Gyoyū-shō* 御遊抄, etc. But especially old novels, written entirely in Japanese, like the *Uzuho-monogatari* 宇津保物語 (10th century), and the famous *Genji-monogatari* 源氏物語 (11th century) abound in references to instruments called *kin* or *koto*.

Now some older Japanese writers maintain that in the passages referred to above *kin* is the only correct reading, and that the seven stringed Chinese Lute is meant. This is stated, for instance, by the learned physician and musicologist Suzuki Ryū (鈴木龍, 1741-1790, details see below, under No. 9). In his book *Kingaku-keimō* (琴學啓蒙 a handbook for the Chinese Lute, written in Japanese) he devotes the 39th chapter, entitled *Hombō-kinkōhai* 本邦琴興廢, to the history of the Chinese Lute in Japan. There he claims that wherever in ancient Japanese texts we find the character 琴 (he refers to the sources mentioned above), it means the Chinese Lute. His argument is that although the Chinese Lute was very popular in old Japan, it gradually fell into abeyance, till Shinetsu's arrival in the 17th century brought about a renaissance. This argument he reiterates in the preface to his edition of the *Tōkō-kinfu* (東臯琴譜, details below). He says: 'In ancient times in our country rites and music flourished; of the eight kinds of musical instruments (i.e. those made of wood, silk, bamboo, clay, metal, stone, leather and gourd) none was missing. Most popular was the Chinese Lute, it was an instrument constantly used by the nobility and high-minded people. This is proved by passages in historical works and other chronicles. But in medieval times, the study of the Lute gradually fell into abeyance, and coming to the present time, its tradition was lost, and there was no one who understood this study. In the Kambun period, however, there came the naturalized priest Tōkō-zenji, named Shin-etsu. . . . Then gradually everywhere in our country people started again to study the Lute. That now in this late age the tones of the Lute that had been silent for several centuries resound again, this is due to the merit of Tōkō-zenji. Is this not a great achievement?' 蓋我古昔，禮樂之隆，八音之器，諸般皆備，而琴最盛行，爲士君子常御之器，乃諸史傳所載，可以徵矣，中世已後，漸廢不行，及至近代，竟失其傳，無復有道之者矣，竄文中，有歸化僧東臯禪師名心越 . . . 於是乎，四方稍復有道琴事者矣，嗚呼，使數百年已絕之微音再振其響晚世者，東臯師之功，豈不亦偉哉。

A closer inspection of the passages referred to, however, clearly shows that it is not the Chinese Lute that is meant by the character 琴



in old Japanese literature. For we find it mentioned that the instrument in question has struts, that its sounds are heard at a considerable distance, that it is used for accompanying purely Japanese songs, that it is played when lying on the floor, etc. Now we know that the Chinese Lute, unlike the *sé* and several varieties of the *chéng*, never has struts; that its tones are so weak as hardly to be audible outside the room where it is played, that its scale can not well be adopted to the Japanese ones, and that it is made to be played on one's lap or on a special stand—its very structure precluding that it is played when lying on the floor. There can be no doubt that in the passages referred to, the *wagon*, *sō*, or some other Japanese or Chinese cither-like instrument is meant. That yet the word *kin* 琴 was used must be explained by the fact that this term had an elegant, literary flavour. Even at present in Japan the character 琴 is often used to write *koto*, although the character 箏 is the correct one. Further the *ch'in* 琴, being the Chinese musical instrument *par excellence*, also in China was used in the meaning of 'musical instrument' in general; I mention that a piano is called in Chinese *yang-ch'in* 洋琴, a violin *t'i-ch'in* 提琴, etc. When we find in ancient Japanese literature expressions like *kokin* 鼓琴, *dankin* 彈琴, these must be taken to be literary idioms, taken over from the Chinese. The character *kin* in those expressions does not point to the Chinese seven-stringed Lute, no more than *ken* 劍 in Japanese texts points to the Chinese straight sword.

These facts were realized by other older Japanese writers, for instance the well-known Japanese expert on the Chinese Lute Kodama Kūkū (兒玉空空, 1734-1811, details see below). In a colophon to a manuscript copy of the Chinese Lute handbook *Li-hsing-yüan-ya* (理性元雅, by the Ming author Chang Ting-yü 張廷玉; cf. Imperial Catalogue ch. 114, 7 verso) he quotes some Japanese writers who aver that the *kin* mentioned e.g. in the *Genji-monogatari* is the Chinese Lute. Then he goes on to say: 'I do not agree with this. Why? The *Genji-monogatari* was written about 700 years ago. If the above statement were true, then in old families and famous monasteries there would certainly have been preserved many of these ancient Chinese Lutes. Why is it that on the contrary only very occasionally one hears about such a thing? . . . In my opinion, our Empire Japan for the first time knew the Chinese Lute since the day that Master Shin-etsu came from the west' 予未以爲然, 何則, 源語之作, 距今纔七百餘年, 果如其言, 則古家名刹, 尙可存其器, 而何其寥寥聞耶. . . 以予臆見, 則皇和之有琴也, 徧于越公西來之日.

The modern Japanese musicologist Sanjō Shōtarō 三條商太郎 comes

to about the same conclusion. Cf. his *Nihon-jōko-ongakushi* (日本上古音楽史 Tokyo 1935), p. 137.

Some other modern Japanese scholars, however, still keep to Suzuki Ryū's argument, and maintain that it was the Chinese seven-stringed Lute that was played on a great scale in ancient Japan. Prof. Tanabe Hisao (田邊尚雄, well-known Japanese musicologist), for instance, sets forth this view in his *Nihon-ongaku-kōwa* (日本音楽講話, Tokyo 1921), on page 364 sq. To bear out this statement he quotes the following passage from the *Gempei-seisuiiki* (源平盛衰記, historical notes covering the period 1161-1181): 'She also is a sensitive lady, a great expert on the *kin* (or *koto*). In former days Po Chū-i in China calling Lute, poetry and wine his three friends<sup>1)</sup> playing the Lute nurtured his feelings . . . This lady continually singing Po Chū-i's poems, playing the *kin* (or *koto*) purified her heart' *kore mata nasake aru nyōbō nite kin (koto) no jōzu to zo kikoe-tamaishi. Mukashi Kara no Hakkyoi wa kinshishu (koto, shi, sake) no mitsu wo tomo toshite tsune ni kin (koto) wo hiite kokoro wo yashinai tamaikeri . . . shi wo kono kita no kata tsune ni eijite kokoro wo sumashi koto wo danji tamaerikeri*. After quoting this passage Prof. Tanabe remarks, that it is clear that here the Chinese Lute is meant, because of the reference to Po Chū-i and his Lute. Now this argument of course does not hold ; for the mere fact that Po Chū-i is mentioned does not constitute any proof. Po Chū-i and his Lute are often referred to in Japanese novels when Japanese music is discussed. I mention, for instance, a passage in the *Genjimonogatari*, in the chapter *Suetsumuhana*. The Princess after which this chapter is named, is a famous performer on the Japanese *koto* ; that here *koto* is meant is evident from the context. Now a lady called Myōbu says of this eccentric Princess to Prince Genji (Kaneko ed., Tokyo 1938, p. 207): 'Her only lover is her *kin*' ; Prince Genji answers : 'Then of the "Three Friends" she at least has one . . . Let me hear her play' *kin wo zo natsukashiki kataraibito to omoeru to kikoyureba, mitsu no tomo nite ima hitokusa ya utate aran. Ware ni kikase yo*. Thus here also Po Chū-i is mentioned, and here definitively a Japanese *koto* is meant.

This fact is not at all astonishing. The Japanese of olden times,

1) The quotation is from a poem by Po Chū-i, entitled *Pei-ch'uang-san-yu* 北窓三友 ; cf. the excellent study *Hakurakuten to Nihon-bungaku* (白楽天と日本文学, Tokyo 1930) by Mizuno Heiji 水野平次, p. 378. For other references to cither-like instruments in the *Genji-Monogatari*, cf. *Genji-Monogatari-no-ongaku* 源氏物語の音楽, by Yamada Takao 山田孝雄, Tokyo 1934, p. 80-108.



though fairly well versed in Chinese literature, were often amazingly ignorant of what we would call "Chinese realia". Thus it is very doubtful whether they realized that the *kin* mentioned in their favourite T'ang poetry was entirely different from cither-like instruments in use in Japan. Their knowledge of Chinese ways of living was as limited as that of our European medieval poets concerning daily life in ancient Greece and Italy. During the Heian period several Japanese missions were sent to China; the writings by the members of these missions, who knew Chinese daily life from their own observation, contain excellent accounts of religious and political conditions prevalent in China. But they write little about Chinese realia; in this respect they conformed to Chinese literary tradition, which condemned the things of daily life as unworthy to write about. Thus we find in Japanese history that with regular intervals the Japanese deemed it necessary to work up arrears in their knowledge of Chinese realia. They found that they had been associating with terms in daily use in China, things quite different in shape and style from those really used by contemporary Chinese. Therefore especially during the Tokugawa period, when the seclusion policy of the Bakufu had limited the intercourse with China to the port of Nagasaki, the Chinese there are eagerly questioned by Japanese scholars: what dresses they wear, what utensils they use, and what Chinese houses and temples look like<sup>2)</sup>. Such knowledge was especially important to those Japanese who wanted to read Chinese novels: in such texts there occur many terms not to be found in Chinese dictionaries and other ordinary works of reference. Thus in the Tokugawa period we find

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2) The most remarkable example of the results of such an enquiry is the book *Shinzoku-kibun* 清俗紀聞, 13 ch. in 6 vols., publ. in 1799 by Nakagawa Chû-ei 中川忠英, who served as a Bakufu official (*bugyô* 奉行) at Nagasaki; this book contains the results of minute enquiries, patiently made with the Chinese at Nagasaki, especially Chinese and Japanese interpreters attached to the government office there. The book gives a detailed account of Chinese customs and Chinese daily life, profusely illustrated with finely executed drawings. The famous Director of the Academy at Edo (the Seidô 聖堂), Hayashi Jussai (林述齋, 1768-1841) added the first preface. Also Chinese refugees were questioned. An interesting example is the *Shunsui-shushi-danki* 舜水朱氏譚綺, printed in 1708 in 4 vols., and compiled by the Japanese sinologue Hitomi Bôsei (人見懋齋, 1638-1696); preface by the scholar Asaka Kaku (安積覺, 1656-1737), dated 1707. This book contains the material regarding 'Things Chinese' obtained by Hitomi from the famous Chinese refugee at the Court of Mito, Chu Shun-shui (朱舜水, 1600-1682). Here we find drawings of Chinese clothing, furniture, temples, envelopes and letters, bills of fare, etc., with the dimensions added, and colour and material recorded with painstaking care.

special Japanese vocabularies of the Chinese vulgar language, where common household words, like spoon, table, comb, etc. are explained by drawings of the Chinese objects.<sup>3)</sup>

The pre-Tokugawa Japanese missions to China had as their primary object the study of Chinese religious and political questions, and of Court and ceremonial music. It is quite understandable that the members of those missions were not in a position to study Lute music, an art that was confined to intimate literary gatherings, and the library of the scholar. Moreover, as we have seen above (chapter III, section 3), in China strict rules prohibited the teaching of the Lute to unqualified persons, and, among those, foreigners are especially mentioned. While during the T'ang dynasty it was comparatively easy to obtain Lutes, on the other hand teachers were few, and may be supposed to have kept to the rules limiting the transmission of the study of the Lute to members of the privileged and highly exclusive class of the literati.

Chinese Lutes occasionally drifted to Japan. In Appendix III above I described the remarkable old Chinese Lute preserved in the Nara Repository ; and also the famous old temple, the Hōryūji 法隆寺, has in its collection a Chinese Lute, dating from the T'ang period. But these Lutes were not actually played. They were regarded merely as curiosities, relics from the ' Land beyond the Seas '.

Finally we must remember that in olden times Japanese knowledge of Chinese music was mainly second-hand, being chiefly obtained through the intermediary of Korea. Now in that country the Chinese Lute as a solo-instrument never became popular. Although the Chinese Lute was taken over together with the ceremonial orchestra, as a solo instrument its place was taken by a special Korean instrument, the so-called *hyōn-kēm* 玄琴. This instrument is still very popular in Korea. It has six strings, of which the three middle ones are strung over sixteen bridges of varying height. It is played with a short rattan stick, that serves as a plectrum. According to the *Ryang-kēm-sin-po* 梁琴新譜 (cf. M. Courant, *Bibliographie Coréenne*, Paris 1896, part III, p. 133), the Chinese Lute was introduced into Korea about 600 A. D. ; the Minister Wang San-ak (王山岳 ; passed official examination in 552), recommended to use in its place the *hyōn-kēm*, invented by him. This

3) For instance the *Shōsetsu-jūi* 小説字彙, publ. in one vol. in 1791. First undated preface by the Japanese sinologue Munakata Rō-oku 宗像蘆屋, authors preface dated 1784. The author only gives his literary name, Shusuien-shujin 秋水園主人.

instrument has its own notation, and its music is quite different from that of the Chinese Lute.

Therefore we must assume that the character *kin* 琴 in old Japanese texts stands for cither-like instruments, either of Japanese, Korean or Chinese origin. Both in China and Korea a great many varieties of the cither called *chêng* 箏 were used. These instruments in both countries being widely used in both sacrificial and popular music, it is only natural that at an early date they found their way to Japan. And many Japanese thought these cither-like instruments were the Chinese Lute so often mentioned in Chinese literature.

It is on the basis of the above considerations that I think we are justified in assuming that it was only with the arrival of Shin-etsu that the Chinese seven-stringed Lute became really known in Japan. A few exceptions do not invalidate this argument: those were isolated cases, that had no real influence on Japanese cultural life.<sup>4)</sup> It was only with the arrival of Shin-etsu that the Chinese Lute was really played in Japan, and found enthusiasts in broader circles of artists and scholars.

\* \* \*

The priest Shin-etsu was a highly interesting personality. In China he is practically unknown; but in Japan abundant materials<sup>5)</sup> about

4) I mention, for instance, Fujiwara Sadatoshi (藤原貞敏, 807-867), the father of Japanese *biwa* music. He was a member of a Japanese mission to China that arrived there in 838, and made great efforts to study Chinese music. He married the daughter of his Chinese *biwa*-teacher, and this girl is said to have been able to play both the *chêng* and the Chinese seven-stringed Lute.

Much later the great Japanese sinologue Ogiu Sorai (荻生徂徠, 1666-1728) made a study of the Chinese Lute, and wrote a book called *Kingaku-taiishō* (琴學太意抄, dated 1722; preserved only in manuscript copies). This, however, is an entirely theoretical essay, the materials for which have been gathered from various Chinese books on the subject. There is no indication that he really became a Lute player.

The same may be said of the Ishikawa Jōzan (石川丈山, 1583-1672). He was a great lover of Chinese poetry, who for the greater part of his life lived in retirement on a beautiful spot in the outskirts of Kyoto. His retreat was called *Shisendō* 詩仙堂: on the walls of his study he hung the images of 36 famous Chinese poets, and there he passed his days. He possessed a Chinese Lute that had belonged to the famous Chinese scholar Ch'ên Chi-ju (陳繼儒, 1558-1639), which he greatly valued; but there is no indication that he actually played it. At present the *Shisendō* may still be seen in its original state, and also the Lute has been preserved; nowadays the place is a nunnery.

5) Most informative are Shin-etsu's complete works, the *Tōkō-zenshū* 東學全集 in two volumes, compiled by Asano Fuzan 淺野斧山, and published in 1911. This edition also contains a complete biography, and reproductions of Shin-etsu's paintings, his calligraphy, and imprints of some of the seals carved by him. His grave is still to be seen near Mito. Cf. also E. W. Clement, *The Tokugawa Princes of Mito*, in: *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, vol. XVIII (1890).

him and his work have been preserved. For in Japan he became famous, and had considerable influence on the cultural life of the time.

Shin-etsu's lay-name was Chiang Hsing-t'ao 蔣興儔, and he was born in 1639. Having entered priesthood, he was enrolled in the Yung-fu monastery 永福寺, at Hangchow. When the Manchus invaded China, in 1676 he left Hangchow, and set out for Japan. In the first month of the year 1677 he arrived in a Chinese ship at Nagasaki, and there settled down in the Kōfuku-ji 興福寺, one of the famous local Chinese monasteries. Shin-etsu then was 38 years old. It appears from his writings that he was a priest of high culture, being at the same time a clever painter, poet, seal engraver and player on the Lute. At that time the great Tokugawa Maecenas, Mitsukuni Lord of Mito (德川光圀, 1628-1700) had established in his fief in Eastern Japan, near Edo, a center of learning, where he had assembled the flower of Japanese scholarship. Mitsukuni was also greatly interested in Chinese studies, and had, in 1665, summoned to his court another learned Chinese refugee, Chu Shun-shui (see below note 14), and made him his Chinese adviser. When Mitsukuni heard about the arrival of Shin-etsu at Nagasaki, in 1678 he sent a messenger, Imai Kōjirō 今井小四郎, to invite Shin-etsu to come to Mito. At the time, however, the Tokugawa government did not allow Chinese to travel freely in Japan; they were allowed to stay only at Nagasaki, and for a limited time. Therefore a special permission had to be obtained. This took several years, and only in 1683 Shin-etsu could set out for Eastern Japan. It seems, however, that during the intervening years he could do some traveling in west Japan; for we read that he visited several centers of Buddhist learning, especially monasteries of the Obaku sect 黄蘗宗, which were traditionally headed by a naturalized Chinese priest. Thus he came in contact with some of the famous Chinese abbots of this sect, notably the priest Moku-an (木菴, 1611-1684).

Arrived at Mito, Shin-etsu, encouraged by Mitsukuni, started manifold religious and artistic activities. He made a thorough study of the Japanese language, and was in regular intercourse with well-known Japanese scholars of the time. He founded the Gion temple 祇園寺 at Mito, and greatly influenced religious life. At his death in 1695 he was buried with great honour. It lies outside the scope of this essay to give a more detailed survey of Shin-etsu's cultural activities: here we shall only concern ourselves with his teaching of the Chinese Lute.

If we were to believe the notes made by older Japanese Lute enthusiasts, Shin-etsu had more than a hundred pupils who under his guidance studied the Chinese Lute. Although this is an exaggeration, still the

number of his Lute disciples seems to have been considerable. Only a few of these, however, became really proficient on this instrument, and transmitted Shin-etsu's teachings further to their own pupils. Best known are the doctor of Chinese medicine Hitomi Chikudō, and the Japanese sinologue Sugiura Kinzen (details below). Shin-etsu taught his pupils the finger technique, and made them practise on simple Lute melodies, for the greater part musical versions of famous Chinese poems. These tunes were eagerly noted down by his pupils, and it is on the basis of such manuscripts that afterwards the *Tōkō-kinfu* (details below) was published.

It is difficult to ascertain whether Shin-etsu as a Lute player, judging by Chinese standards, ranked as an expert. At one time, basing my opinion upon the tunes preserved in the *Tōkō-kinfu*, I was inclined to think that he was but a mediocre performer. For in this handbook only very simple and much abbreviated Lute melodies are given; they lack all the grandeur of real Lute music. On the other hand we have a letter of Hitomi Chikudō to Shin-etsu (cf. *Tōkō-zenshū*, II, leaf 44), from which it appears that Shin-etsu advised him to use the well-known Ming handbook *Sung-hsien-kuan-ch'in-pu* (松絃館琴譜, preface dated 1614; cf. Imperial Catalogue 113 leaf 8 verso); this would imply that Shin-etsu taught his advanced students on the basis of this handbook—which is by no means an easy one. Therefore it would seem that the handbook that bears Shin-etsu's name, the *Tōkō-kinfu*, only represents the tunes that Shin-etsu taught to beginners. For advanced students did not need a special handbook: they could use the great Chinese ch'in-pu. Taking into consideration the meagre evidence available, I now think we had better leave the question of Shin-etsu's abilities as a Lute expert undecided. That he was not one of the great Chinese musicians, however, appears from the fact that he left no important compositions of his own.

When he came to Japan, Shin-etsu brought three Chinese Lutes with him. Best known is the instrument called *Yü-shun* (虞舜, Jap. Gushun), a fine Ming specimen, covered with red cement. This instrument was long preserved in the treasury of the Tokugawa's of Mito. In 1834 the celebrated Mito scholar Fujita Tōko (藤田東湖, 1806-1855) was ordered to compose a Chinese essay, to be written inside the cover of the box this Lute was kept in. This essay, entitled *Gushun-kinki* 虞舜琴記, is to be found reprinted in Fujita's complete works, the *Tōko-ikō* (東湖遺稿, edition of 1877, vol. 2 leaf 25), and the original may still be seen on the box, now, together with the instrument itself, in the Imperial Museum, in Ueno Park, Tokyo. Secondly Shin-etsu had a Lute called



*Su-wang* (素王, Jap. So-ō); this Lute he presented to his pupil Hitomi Chikudō, and for some generations it was preserved in Hitomi's family. At present it seems to have been lost. Thirdly a Lute called *Wan-ho-sung* (萬壑松, Jap. Mankakushō), preserved in the Gion temple in Mito.

Further Shin-etsu taught his pupils how to make Lutes themselves. These Japanese-made Lutes are built from *kiri* wood, the same material as the Japanese *koto* is made of. Instead of the coat of cement of the Chinese Lutes, the Japanese ones are covered with ordinary lacquer. This has the advantage of not being affected by the humidity of the Japanese climate; but on the other hand such a coat does not develop those tiny cracks (*tuan-wên*; see above, Appendix III), which give the sound-box of an antique Chinese Lute its peculiar beauty. Of these Japanese-made Chinese Lutes many are still preserved. I have in my collection seven specimens, which are in good condition and show interesting inscriptions. They are easily distinguishable from genuine Chinese specimens by the lacquer coating, and by the fact that the tuning pegs (*chên* 軫), are much shorter than those of the Chinese ones. This is because the Japanese Lute players rarely had a real Lute table (which has a special cavity for the pegs), and usually played the Lute either on an ordinary low table (see ill. I), or on the floor.

Later Japanese Lute players often could obtain real Chinese Lutes from the Chinese in Nagasaki. Occasionally among the Chinese living there, or passing through, there were some who could play the Lute. But probably they were not great virtuosi. Nagasaki pictures often show Chinese playing the Lute, usually accompanied by other stringed instruments, and serving to enliven a dinner party (ill. II and III). This fact alone shows already that those Chinese Lute players were no real experts, for such would certainly not thus offend against the rules for the Lute player.

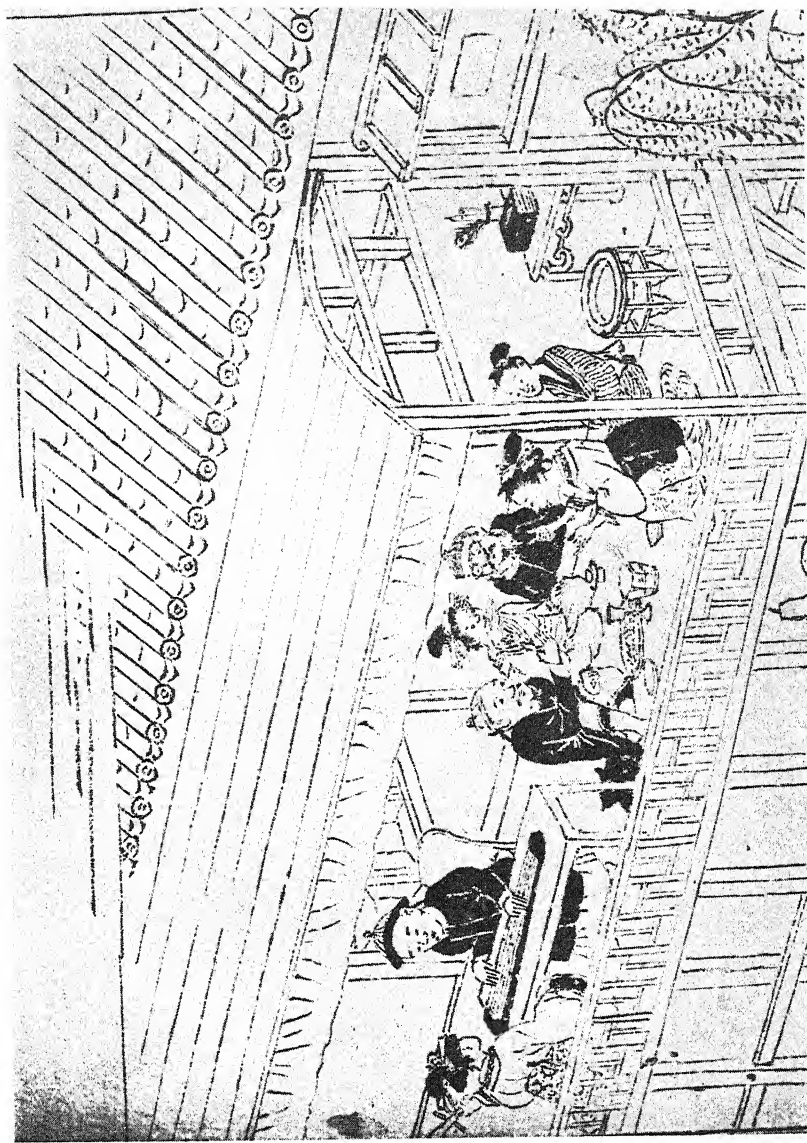
Through Shin-etsu's teachings, and by studying Chinese books on the Lute, Japanese players became also acquainted with Lute ideology. It is not without interest to observe how in Japan with regard to Lute ideology there arose controversies similar to those found in China.

In chapter III, section 3 above we have seen that Lute players of the Confucianist school denied Buddhist priests the right to play the Lute. Now in Japan about half of the Lute players were Buddhist priests, and Japanese Lute tradition is founded upon the teachings of Shin-etsu, a Zen priest. The famous doctor of Chinese medicine Murai Kinzan (see below) took exception to this. He learned the Lute from a Chinese scholar who passed through Nagasaki, and claims to have the only real Lute tradition. In the colophon to his *Kinzan-kinroku* (see below) he says:

The Lute is the great instrument of the Holy Sages, it includes all music. Of those things that the Superior Man has always with him, the Lute is dearest to him, he does not suffer to be separated from it (quoted from *Fêng-su-t'ung-i*, see above, chapter III, section 4). The Way of the Lute which in the Middle Age flourished in our country has now become lost. The methods of the Lute as now practised in our country are all based upon the teachings of the two priests Shin-etsu and Mansō (see below); their methods for the greater part are those used by vulgar people of the Ming and Ch'ing periods. How could these two priests know the difference between elegant and vulgar? Therefore I did not relish the way these two priests play the Lute, and for myself I have sighed over this for a long time. But traveling to Nagasaki, I met a Chinese called P'an Wei-ch'uan, and he taught me how to play the Lute, and the finger technique' 琴者聖人大器，而爲樂之統矣，君子所常御者，琴最親密，不離於身，我東方中古琴法已亡，今海內琴法，皆出于心越萬宗二僧氏之手，多是明清俗間之法也，二僧氏安知雅俗之分乎，余故不喜二僧氏之琴，竊歎嗟久矣，嘗游長崎，邂逅于清人潘渭川者，偶受琴法手勢。 But Murai Kinzan's case is an exception; the majority of Japanese Lute players followed the tradition established by Shin-etsu.

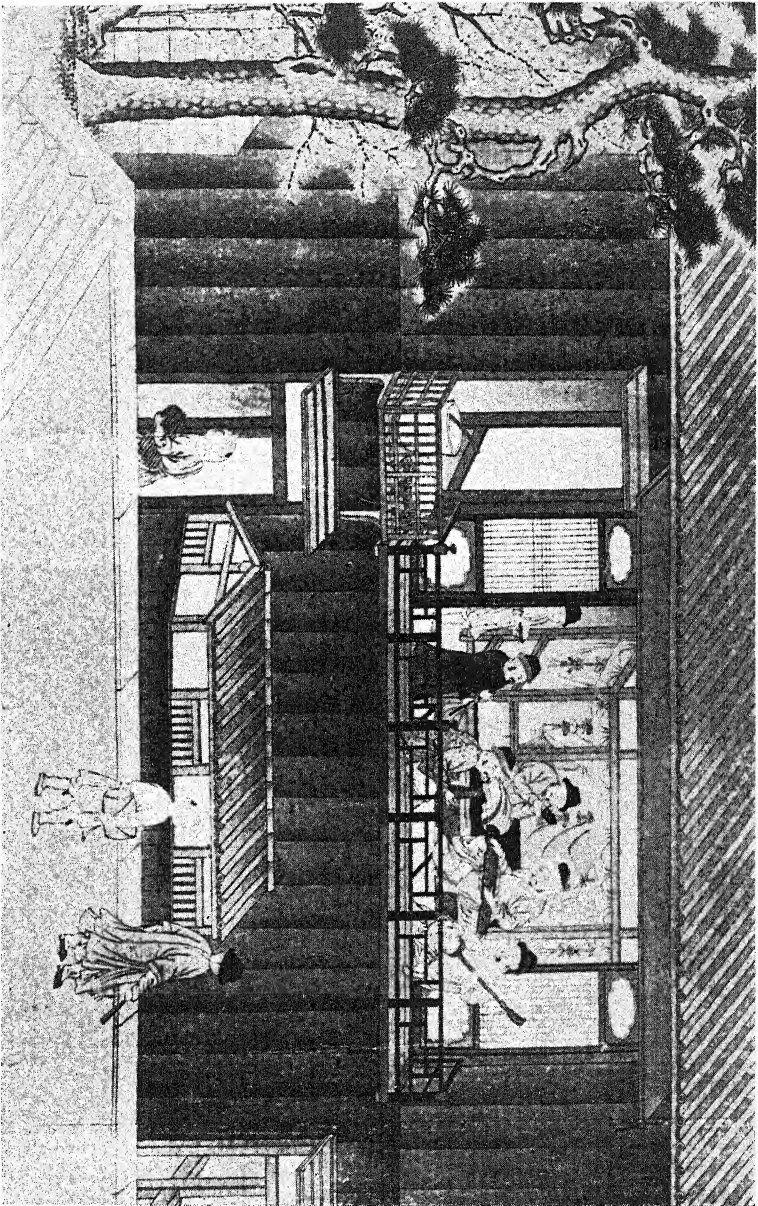
Shin-etsu's pupils spread the study of the Lute over the entire country. First the *kingaku* flourished among people of taste in Edo, roughly from 1770 till 1780. Its heighday falls in the subsequent Kansei and Bunka periods (1789-1817). During this period playing the Chinese Lute developed into a veritable craze: everyone who wanted to show his interest in elegant literary pursuits studied this instrument, and wrote essays and odes in praise of its music. It was especially favoured by those in direct contact with Chinese studies, such as the *jukan* 儒官, the Japanese sinologues in the service of the Shōgun, and by the so-called *tai-i* 待醫, the doctors of Chinese medicine attached to the government. And further by all who were attracted by exciting novelties. Therefore we need not be astonished to find among these Lute enthusiasts also some *rangakusha* 蘭學者, students of Dutch learning. Many Japanese Lute students soon dropped this subject, but there were also not a few more serious musicians, who carried their study through with great enthusiasm. Some even devoted their whole life to this music.

This sudden flourishing of the Chinese Lute in Japan becomes quite understandable when one thinks of the fact that the Japanese scholars realized, that now at last they had obtained the real Chinese Lute, the name of which had been familiar to them for so long through their studies of Chinese literature. For as has been pointed out above, there can



II A banquet at the house of a Chinese merchant in Nagasaki. The diners on the right are playing *morra* with geisha girls. On the left a Chinese is playing the Lute, accompanied on the *samisen* (three stringed Japanese guitar) by a geisha. The picture of the Lute is not very clear; it might also be a small *chōtō*.

From : *Nagasaki-shi* 長崎市史, *Fūzoku-hen* 風俗編, publ. 1925 by the Municipal Office of Nagasaki.



III A musical scene in the Chinese Factory at Nagasaki. One Chinese is playing the Lute, while his friends accompany him on guitar, mouth-organ and flute.  
Part of a Japanese picture scroll, now in the library of the Imperial University at Kyoto.

be no doubt that even as late as the Tokugawa period the greater part of Japanese lovers of Chinese studies fondly believed that the character *kin* 琴 in Chinese texts stood for an instrument very much like the Japanese *koto*. This is proved by an inspection of Japanese illustrated editions of old Chinese books: there one regularly sees old Chinese poets playing upon the Japanese *koto*!

The seven-stringed Lute however was too typically Chinese ever to become really a part of Japanese life. The music of the Chinese Lute is based upon principles fundamentally different from those underlying Japanese music, and moreover its study presupposed a solid knowledge of the Chinese language, both written and spoken. As is well known, the Japanese have evolved a special way of reading Chinese texts, consisting of paraphrasing the Chinese in the Japanese vernacular; in this process the order of the words is drastically changed. As the text of the Lute melodies could of course only be sung in the Chinese way, the Japanese Lute player, when wishing to accompany his play by singing, had to learn how to read the text in the Chinese pronunciation. In Japanese handbooks for the Chinese Lute, the Chinese pronunciation is added to the characters of the text in *kana*<sup>6)</sup>. It goes without saying that thus the text became meaningless to the average Japanese hearer. As a reaction to this, the Japanese Lute player Urakami Gyokudō (details below) composed purely Japanese texts for the Lute melodies. It seems that shortly after the introduction of the Chinese Lute into Japan by Shin-etsu, efforts were made to adapt the Lute to Japanese music. The *Gyokudō-zōsho-kinfu* (see below under No. 14) says: 'Then it was asked: Onoda Tōzen (see below No. 7) used to play Japanese songs on the Chinese Lute; but fearing that this was contrary to the principles of Lute ideology, he did not show these attempts to others. Have you heard about this? I answered: In the Kambun period (1661-1672), the naturalized priest Shin-etsu stayed at Mito; he excelled in playing the Lute. Onoda Tōzen continued his teachings. The Shōgun ordered the official musician Tsuji Buzen-no-kami together with Onoda Tōzen to work out Chinese Lute versions of Japanese songs. When these versions were ready, they were played in the palace of the Shōgun' 又聞、東川野廷賓、嘗被國歌於七絃恐失琴意、不示之人、予聞其說乎、曰、寬文中、歸化僧心越留錫水府、善鼓琴、廷賓傳心越彈法、德廟命伶官辻豐前守與廷賓、謀被本邦之樂于七絃、曲成也、進奏於殿中。 These attempts, however, seem to have had but scant

6) Thus the study of the Chinese Lute stimulated, just as the Chinese reading of Buddhist texts introduced by the Obaku sect 黃蘗宗, the study of the Chinese spoken language in Japan.



success. The majority of Japanese Lute players aimed at singing the Lute melodies in as purely Chinese a way as possible. Some even especially went to Nagasaki, there to learn from the resident Chinese the real Chinese pronunciation (see below).

With the Tempō period (天保, 1830-1843) it seems that the interest in the Chinese Lute decreased, and that its music ceased to be a subject of social importance. Henceforward experts on the Lute must be sought for in some isolated monasteries, and in some exclusive circles of retired scholars. With the Meiji Restoration in 1868 a craze for western things flooded the country, and later, in 1894, the Sino-Japanese war further decreased the interest in the Chinese Lute. In the beginning of this century the Chinese Lute had become a curiosity in Japan, and only very few people still knew how to play it. A final blow was the Great Earthquake in 1923, when numerous Lutes in private collections and curio shops were destroyed. It is only in recent years that Japanese musicologists again are taking an interest in this charming instrument, that for two centuries was so intimately connected with cultural life of the later Tokugawa period.

\* \* \*

The materials regarding the transmission of the Chinese Lute in Japan have never been assembled. Japanese sources occasionally give short lists of well-known teachers and their pupils, but none of these can make any claim at completeness. For more than four years I have been trying to supplement these lists. Some facts I discovered in prefaces or colophons to Japanese books and manuscripts on the Chinese Lute, some on tombstones of Lute players, some in the works of Tokugawa sinologues, and some in inscriptions on Japanese-made Chinese Lutes. Finally I collected some minor data during a stay at Nagasaki. I have tried to assemble these scattered materials, and at last succeeded in piecing together a historical table of the transmission of the study of the Chinese Lute in Japan, which is presented here. It is still far from complete, but yet it contains more materials than any of the Japanese tables I know of. Each of the persons tabulated is briefly discussed, and their activities with regard to the study of the Chinese Lute are given in outline. A perusal of this list may give the reader a fairly correct idea of how, and by whom, the Chinese Lute was studied in Japan, and what was its cultural significance.

The most important sources were the following.

- a. A manuscript entitled *Kingaku-denjū-ryakkei* 琴學傳授略系 'An outline of the tradition of Kingaku', written by the Japanese Lute expert

Shinraku Kansō (see below, no. 20), and dated 1813. The text of this manuscript, that was appended to a Japanese manuscript-extract from the well-known Chinese ch'in-pu *Ch'in-hsüeh-hsin-shêng* (琴學心聲, by Chuang Chên-fêng 莊臻鳳, author's preface dated 1664), I have published in my article *Chinese literary music and its introduction into Japan* (Commemoration volume for Professor Muto, Nagasaki 1937).

b. An essay by the Japanese sinologue Nakane Shuku (中根淑, lit. name Kōtei 香亭, 1839-1913), entitled *Shichigenkin-no-denrai* 七絃琴の傳來. This essay is to be found in his posthumously edited works, the *Kōtei-ibun* (香亭遺文, edited by Shimbo Iwaji 新保磐次, Tokyo 1916, pp. 442-456).

c. A list entitled *Kinkyoku-sōden-keifu* 琴曲相傳系譜, to be found in the *Tōkō-zenshū* 東皐全集, II, leaf 61.

d. Two manuscript albums, now in the collection of the Japanese scholar Nakayama Kyūshirō 中山久四郎. In these albums several members of a Japanese association of Lute lovers, that in the eighties gathered in a temple at Edo, under guidance of the Lute master Kodama Kūkū (see below under no. 19), wrote down essays and poems on the Lute, stray notes on the study of the Lute, tunes in notation, etc. Each member wrote himself, and attached his seals. Thus these two albums, though small and badly worm eaten, contain valuable materials.

I have divided my list into two parts. The first I call *naiden* 内傳, 'inner tradition'; this is the line of Japanese Lute players headed by the priest Shin-etsu. The second, which I call *geden* 外傳 'outer tradition', contains those Japanese Lute players who learnt the Lute from Chinese lay-men.

### *Naiden, the Inner Tradition*

1. SUGIURA KINZEN 杉浦琴川, named Masamoto 正職, a Confucianist scholar attached to the Bakufu. He seems not to have published any literary works, and is chiefly known as an expert on the Chinese Lute. He was first taught the Lute by Hitomi Chikudō (see below no. 2), then continued his studies under Shin-etsu himself. He carefully collected the various tunes taught by the master, and after ten years study, in the Hōei period (寶永, 1704-1710), published a handbook for the Lute, called after the master *Tōkō-kinfu* 東皐琴譜. The first preface to this book is written by the famous Director of the Tokugawa Academy<sup>7)</sup> (the Seidō 聖堂), the sinologue Hayashi Hōkō (林鳳岡, 1691-1732); further

7) For details about this Academy, known as the *Shōheizaka-gakumonjo* 昌平坂學問所, cf. my article *Kakkaron, a Japanese echo of the Opium War*, in: Monumenta Serica, vol. IV (1939), no. 2.

there is a preface by the Japanese Lute player Hitomi Tōgen (see below no. 3), and by the scholar Kō Gentai (高玄岱, 1640-1732). Kō Gentai was of Chinese descent, his grandfather being a Chinese from Fukien Province, interpreter at the Chinese office in Nagasaki; Gentai was known as an excellent calligrapher. The Tōkō-kinfu gives a number of minor Lute melodies in simple setting. As shall be seen below, this handbook was reprinted several times. I may mention here already, that the edition of 1827 is the easiest to obtain. This edition, in three volumes, contains about twenty tunes; all have the words added to the notation, and the Chinese pronunciation is indicated in the Japanese *katakana*-syllabary. The famous calligrapher Nukina Kai-oku (貫名海屋, 1778-1863) added a preface, and the Lute player Kojima Hyaku-ichi (see below no. 15) wrote a colophon. The latter says that this edition goes back directly to manuscripts collected by Shin-etsu's pupils.

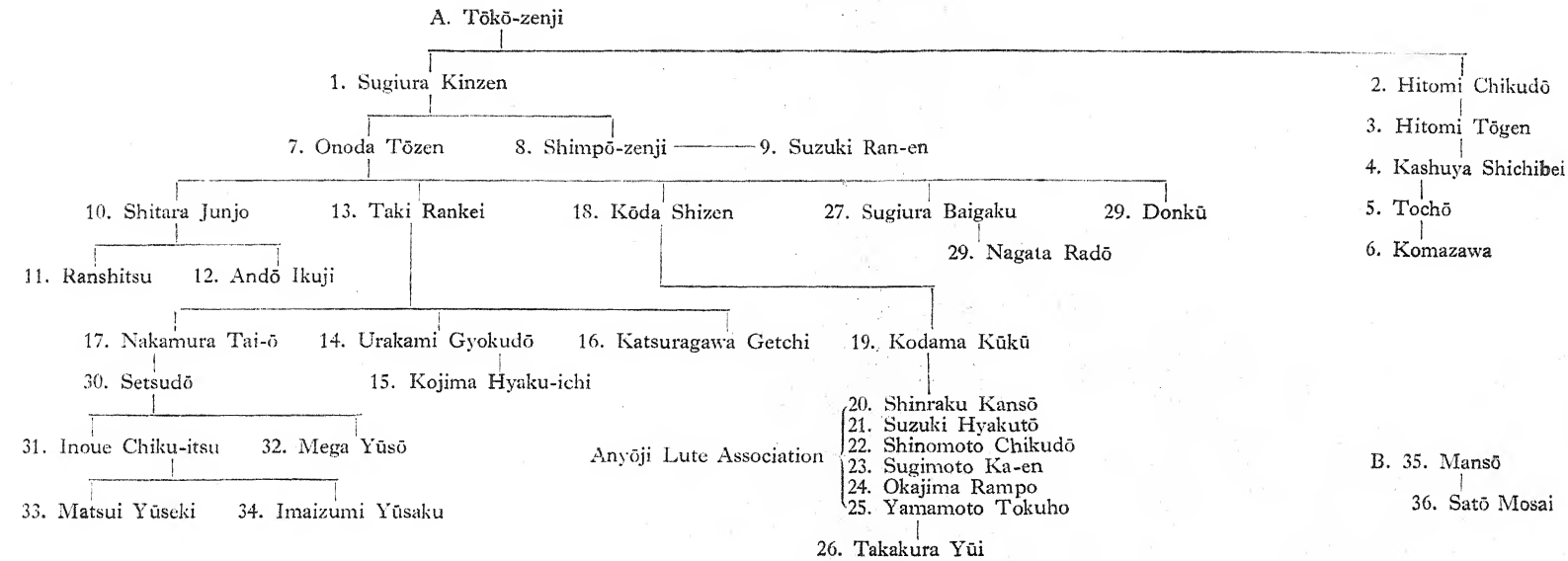
2. HITOMI CHIKUDO 人見竹洞, 1620-1688; named Setsu 節, styled Gikei 宜卿, other name Yūgen 友元; lit. names Chikudō and Kaku-zan 鶴山. Originally he was a doctor of Chinese medicine. Afterwards he concentrated upon Chinese literary studies, and was appointed a *jukan* 儒官, Confucianist scholar in the service of the Shogunate. As such he was ordered by the Shogun to assist Hayashi Shunsai (林春齋, also known as Gahō 鶯峰, 1618-1680), head of the Seidō (see above) in compiling the *Zoku-honchō-tsūgan* 續本朝通鑑, a historical work.

Chikudō is considered the greatest of Shin-etsu's Lute disciples. He must have started the study of the Lute very soon after Shin-etsu's arrival in Eastern Japan, for in 1685 his relations with the master were so intimate, that Shin-etsu presented him with a Ming Lute. On this occasion Chikudō wrote the following note: 'Tōkō-zenji presented me with an antique Lute, saying: "I wished to wait till I would meet someone with a true understanding of music, and then (give him this Lute and) at the same time transmit its Way. Now, having met a man of elegant tastes, I feel I must give him this Lute". I was deeply moved by these kind words and felt it was more than I deserved. Now this Lute has inside the upper hole an inscription of some tens of characters, saying that it was made in the year 1564, that is 121 years hence. That this object has lived through such a tumultuous period in Chinese history, and, escaping the vicissitudes of war, landed in this country, this means that a propitious fate watched over it. I wished to engrave an elegant name on its bottom board, and asked the master for one. He named this Lute Yūn-ho-t'ien-lai, and below I engraved a seal reading Hêng-hua.<sup>8)</sup> This Lute

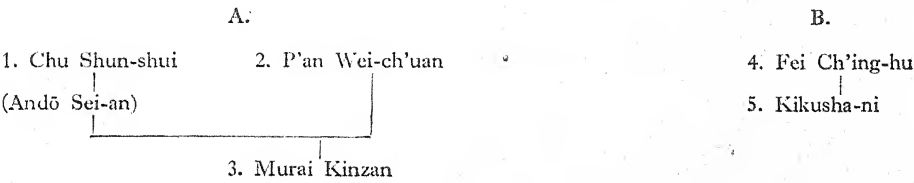
8) Hêng-hua 'Flower of the Hêng-fief'; apparently this Lute was made by the Prince of Hêng, famous as a Lute builder; cf. appendix III above.

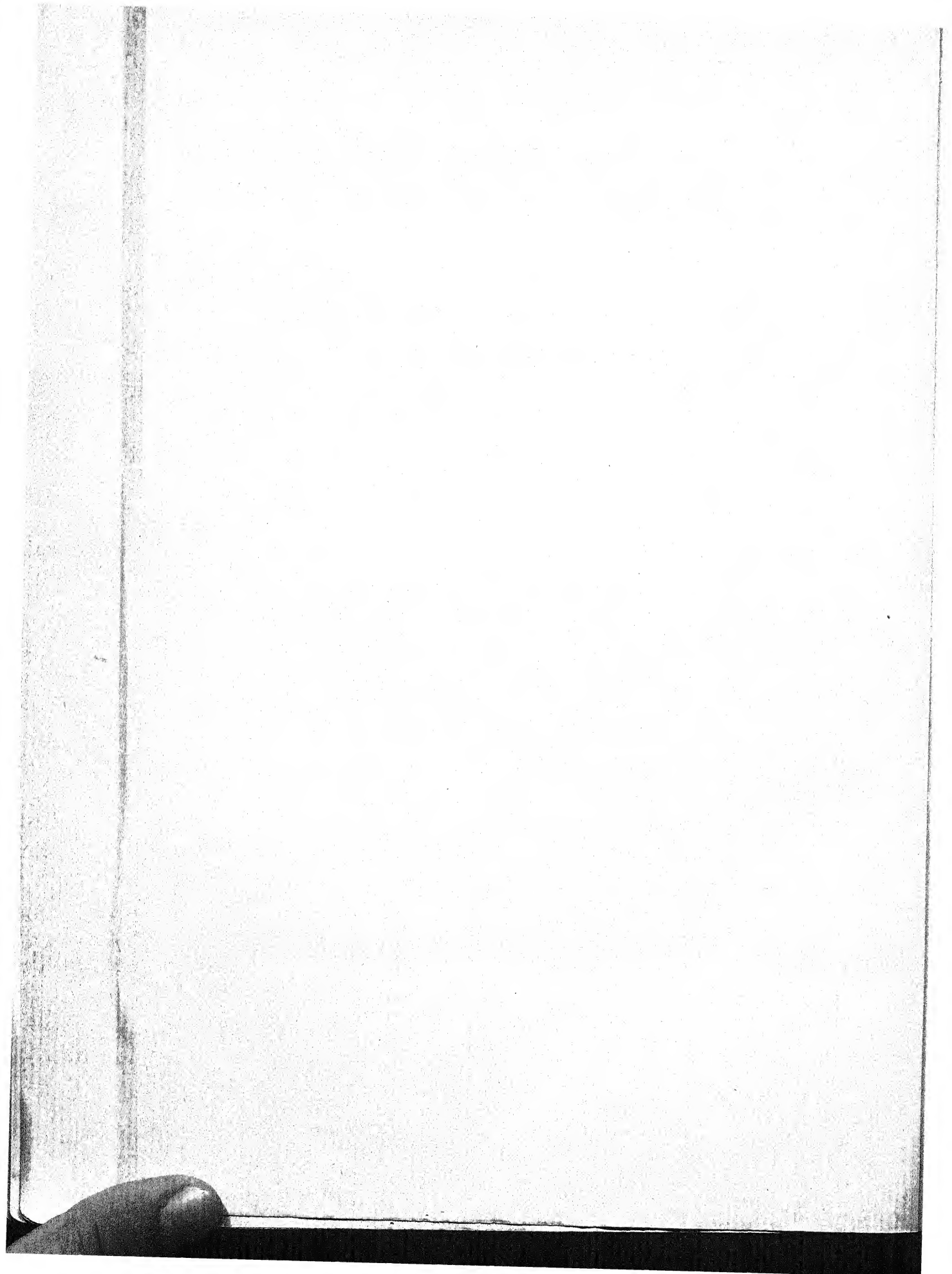
Historical table of the tradition of the Chinese Lute in Japan

I. Naiden : the Inner Tradition



II. Geden: the Outer Tradition







I regard as a treasure of my house'. 東皐禪師賜僕以一古琴，諭曰，欲待知音者並傳其道，今欣遇雅尚，不得不已爲贈，僕深感懇篤之言，且自愧之，其爲琴也，龍池之中有數十字之題者，所謂嘉靖甲子製，及今百二十一年也，經中朝亂離之際能免兵燹而到此，可謂物之幸也，僕謂題佳名於琴腹，而請之師，即題曰雲和天籟，而其下以衡華二字爲印，以爲家寶。 In Chikudō's family the Lute tradition was continued, his first pupil being his son, Hitomi Tōgen.

3. HITOMI TOGEN 人見桃源, named Gin 沂, style Ro-nan 魯南. He was taught the Lute by his father, and inherited from him Shin-etsu's Lute So-ō, and instruments for building Lutes. He also was a Chinese scholar, but little is known about his writings.

4. KASHUYA SHICHIBEI 甲州屋七兵衛, studied the Lute under Hitomi Chikudō. Little is known about him, except that he was a merchant of Edo, a dealer in antiques, with a great interest in music. Some sources say that he also studied the Lute under Onoda Tōzen (see below, no. 7).

5. TOCHO 杜澗, styled Chōkō 澗公, also Shishuku 師叔; lit. names Shōka-dōjin 松篁道人, also Goteki-sannin 五適散人, and Katei-dōjin 華亭道人. Well-known painter, poet and engraver of seals. During the Tenmei period (天明 1781-1789) he published a book with imprints of seals carved by him. He was a great lover of the Chinese Lute, having been taught by Kashuya (see no. 4), and also by Kodama Kūkū (see below, no. 19). There is preserved an interesting manuscript by his hand, an essay written in Japanese, and entitled *Kinden-setsu* 琴傳說; its date is 1782.<sup>9)</sup> Here he first gives an outline of ch'in ideology, and then goes on to discuss the transmission of the Lute in Japan. He says that during a stay at Nagasaki, he was taught the Chinese way of reading poetry by a Chinese there, Kung Yün-jang 龔允讓, lit. name Hsüan-chai 遜齋. Thus he could accompany his playing on the Lute with singing the Chinese poems. It is of interest to note that he explains his lit. name *Goteki* 五適 'The Five Inclinations', as referring to his love for the Lute, poetry, calligraphy, painting, and cutting seals 琴詩書畫印.

6. A certain KOMAZAWA 駒澤某. Of him we know only that he was a man from Susaka in Shinshu (信州, 須坂), and that he studied the Lute under Chikudō. Yet he must have played some role among players on the Chinese Lute, for several sources mention his name.

7. ONODA TOZEN 小野田東川, 1684-1763. Named Empō 延寶 (other sources give Teihin 廷賓), also Kunimitsu 國光; lit. name Tōzen.

9) This essay was published by the contemporary scholar Mimura Seisaburō 三村清三郎, in the Japanese monthly *Sho-en* 書苑, vol. II no. 1 (1938), under the title *Goteki-sensei-kindensetsu* 五適先生琴傳說.

Chiefly famous as an expert on the Chinese Lute. He studied the Lute under Sugiura Kinzen, of whose family he was a hereditary follower. He is said to have had hundreds of pupils, who under his guidance made a study of the Chinese Lute. Once the Tokugawa Shogun Yoshimune (吉宗, 1677-1751) summoned him to his court, and made him play for him the Chinese Lute.

8. SHIMPO-ZENJI 新豐禪師, no details known.

9. SUZUKI RAN-EN 鈴木蘭園, 1741-1790; named Ryū 龍, style Shi-un 子雲. Originally a doctor of Chinese medicine, a disciple of the famous doctor Asai To-nan (淺井圖南, 1706-1782). He was an eager student of Chinese literature, and especially made a study of Chinese music. In 1816 there appeared at Osaka a book by him on musical theory, entitled *Ritsuryō-bensetsu* 律呂辨說. He studied the Chinese Lute under Shimpō-zenji (above, no. 8), and published in 1772 a small edition of the *Tōkō-kinfu*, in one volume. An advertisement on the last page of this book says, that another study by him on the Chinese Lute, entitled *Kin-gaku-keimō* 琴學啓蒙 is also going to be published. I have, however, never come across printed editions of this book; but I obtained a finely calligraphed manuscript copy. Ran-en himself also built Lutes. The *Kinzan-kinroku* (see below, Geden No. 3) on leaf 8 mentions a Lute called Hsüan-hsiang 玄響, built by Ran-en after the model of the T'ang Lute preserved in the Hōryūji. The inscription in the upper hole runs: 'Copy of a Lute of the K'ai-yüan period (713-741), preserved in the Hōryūji in Yamato. Made by Minamoto (the original name of Ran-en) Ryū, from Kyōto in the autumn of the year 1784' 大和國法隆寺所藏開元琴之製天明四年甲辰之秋平安源龍造之.

10. SHITARA JUNJO 設樂純如, a man from Edo. With four Lute players described hereafter (No. 13, 18, 27 and 29), he belonged to the most famous Lute disciples of Onoda Tōzen. Unfortunately I could find no further details about him.

11. RANSHITSU 蘭室, the best known Lute pupil of Shitara Junjo. He was abbot of the Shinryū-ji 眞龍寺, a temple in Asakusa 淺草, at Edo. In his later years he fell ill, and became blind; but this did not prevent him from continuing to teach the Lute. This he only stopped when his end drew near, and he lost the power of speech.

12. ANDO IKUJI 安藤幾次, nothing known, except that Shitara Junjo considered him one of his best pupils.

13. TAKI RANKEI 多紀藍溪, 1732-1801, named Motonori 元徳, also Yasumoto 安元, styled Chūmei 仲明; lit. name Rankei, also Eiju-in 永壽院. Famous doctor of Chinese medicine, attached to the Shogunate. Well-

known as a student of Chinese literature, and especially well-read in old Chinese books on medicine. He studied the Lute under Onoda Tōzen, and himself had many pupils who became well-known as experts on the Chinese Lute.

14. URAKAMI GYOKUDO 浦上玉堂, 1745-1820, style Kun-po 君輔, lit. names Gyokudō and Bokusai 穆齋. A famous painter in the Chinese style from Kyoto. He was an enthusiast performer on the Chinese Lute, and was taught by a direct disciple of Taki Rankei. He published a handbook for the Lute, entitled *Gyokudō-zōsho-kinfu* 玉堂藏書琴譜, in one vol., published at Kyoto in 1791. This contains fifteen tunes, with the Japanese text of the melodies written out in *manyō-gana* 萬葉假名, a more elaborate style of the Japanese syllabary *hiragana*. From these tunes it appears that Gyokudō made conscious efforts to give the Chinese Lute a more Japanese character, for all of the tunes are purely Japanese; I cite titles as *Aoyagi* 青柳, *Sakurabito* 櫻人, *Ise-no-umi* 伊勢海, *Umegae* 梅枝, etc. Some of these tunes are meant to be played by a duo of the Chinese Lute and the Japanese *koto* (與箏合奏). After the prefaces this book gives some stray notes on the history of the Chinese Lute in Japan; they are in dialogue form, and bear the title *Tōmon-hassoku* 答問八則. On leaf 7 of this section Gyokudō explains why he tried to adapt the Chinese Lute to Japanese music. He says: 'Master Rankei (see under no. 13) studied the Lute under Teihin (i.e. Onoda Tōzen, see no. 7). Visiting Edo on an official mission, I met master Rankei, and asked him to teach me the Lute. Later, however, I thought by myself: the words of the tunes taught by him are all pronounced in the Chinese way, so that people who hear these songs can not understand them. Not understanding them they are not influenced by them. Not influencing the hearers, this music can not be used for teaching them' 藍溪先生者, 學琴於廷賓, 余往祇役東都時見先生, 請彈法, 退而竊謂, 其歌曲華音, 而人聞之不解, 不解則不感, 不感則不足爲教. From an introductory note to this book, *Gyokudō-kinki* 玉堂琴記, it appears that the author obtained an old Chinese Lute, that was made by the Ming scholar Ku T'ien-su (顧天宿, style: Yüan-chao 元昭); in the Kambun period (寛文 1661-1673); this Lute was brought to Nagasaki, where it came into the hands of the Chinese interpreter Liu I-hsien 劉益賢. When Urakami finally obtained this instrument, that was called *Reiwa* 靈和, and further bore the seal *Gyokudō-seiun* 玉堂清韻, he called his study after this Lute, i.e. *Gyokudō*. *Gyokudō* was buried in the Honnōji 本能寺 at Kyoto. When this temple burned down, his grave was replaced by a simple stone monument, that is still to be seen today. On the two pillars the characters *Reiwa* are engraved. Further there

still exists a stone tablet, erected in his honour on the place where he used to live, now the grounds of the Hōrinji 法輪寺, in the outskirts of Kyoto. I visited this place in 1937, and made a rubbing of this inscription, written out by the famous Japanese scholar Rai Sanyō (頼山陽, 1780-1832). The contemporary painter Hashimoto Kansetsu 橋本關雪 published in 1924 a magnificent volume with reproductions of Gyokudō's paintings, entitled *Gyokudō-kinshi-iboku-shū* 玉堂琴士遺墨集. It opens with a painting by Gyokudō's son, which represents the master with his beloved Lute on his knees. To this book there is added a treatise called *Urakami-gyokudō-jikō* 浦上玉堂事考, where one will find full details about his life and his Lute.

15. KOJIMA HYAKU-ICHI 兒島百一, 1778-1835; named Ki 祺; lit. names Hōrin 鳳林 and Teiseki 貞石. He is the best known of Urakami Gyokudō's pupils on the Chinese Lute. He is described as a man of elegant tastes, learned in Chinese literature and a great calligrapher. His colophon to the *Tōkō-kinfu* (see above, under no. 1) is written in excellent *li-shu*, the so-called chancery script.

16. KATSURAGAWA GETCHI 桂川月池, 1751-1809; named Hoshū 甫周. A doctor of Chinese medicine, physician to the Shogunate. Getchi was a *rangakusha* 蘭學者, a student of Dutch learning, and one of the great pioneers of the introduction of western medical science into Japan. As a Lute player he belonged to the school of the other famous doctor, Taki Rankei.

17. NAKAMURA TAIO 中村太翁, named Teiko 貞国, style Shiken 子軒. He also belonged to the Lute school of Taki Rankei, and seemed to have enjoyed considerable fame as a Lute expert. Unfortunately little is known about him.

18. KODA SHISEN 幸田子泉, died 1758; named Chikamitsu 親盈. A famous mathematician in the service of the Shogunate. He studied mathematics under the well-known Nakane Hakuzan (中根白山, 1662-1733), and was an excellent performer both on the Chinese Lute, which he learned from Onoda Tōzen (above, no. 7), and on the Japanese *koto*. He is said to have published a book on the Chinese Lute in 8 ch., containing 48 tunes; this, however, I have never been able to discover. In his family there were preserved all instruments for building Lutes, and for making the silk Lute strings, copied after originals that had belonged to Shin-etsu.

19. KODAMA KUKU 兒玉空室, 1734-1811; name Shin 愼, style Mokuho 默甫 (not to be confused with the Chinese scholar Kodama Kizan 兒玉旗山, who was also called *Shin*, but those dates are 1801-1835).



A scholar known for his refined tastes, who published many books between 1750-1770. He studied the Chinese Lute under Kōda Shisen. He lived in Ushigome-ku (牛籠區; nowadays written 牛込), a quarter in Edo. There he organized in a temple called Anyōji 安養寺, in Teramachi 寺町, regular meetings of Japanese lovers of the Lute. These meetings were attended by a great number of people, over a hundred in all. Most famous among these was Shinraku Kansō (see below, no. 20), who drew up a document regulating these meetings. Later Kūkū changed his family name from Kodama into Shukutani 宿谷. Kūkū also studied diligently Chinese ch'in-pu. I possess a manuscript, copied after the original manuscript by Kodama, which contains extracts from the *Ch'in-ching*, by Chang Ta-ming (cf. Appendix II, no. 5). In Kodama's preface he says that he compiled this manuscript because he found many discrepancies in the explanations of the finger technique in various Chinese ch'in-pu.

20. SHINRAKU KANSO 新樂間叟, called Tei 定, style Shiko 士固, lit. name Aikendō 愛閑堂. Originally he was a samurai in the service of the Bakufu, but later turned to literary and musical studies. He learned the Lute from Kodama Kūkū, and seems to have been one of the prominent persons in the Lute meetings at the Anyōji, mentioned above. It was he who drew up the rules for these meetings. This document is reproduced in the *Shichigenkin-no-denrai* by Nakane Kōtei (see above); I translate it below, as it gives a good impression of the atmosphere surrounding the Chinese Lute in Japan.

'In former days Ssū-ma Kuang (司馬光, the great Sung scholar, 1019-1086) and his friends organized the *Chên-shuo-hui*<sup>10)</sup> "True Simplicity Gathering": those attending were served only a couple of times coarse rice and unstrained wine. From this it may be seen what was the mental attitude of the former sages: although they were honoured and wealthy, they were frugal and they restrained themselves, they did not indulge in common habits and prodigality. Now we have concluded a pact among ourselves, following this example. We are poor, and we can not afford luxury, and by nature we are averse of affectation and pomposity. So by necessity we conform ourselves to the spirit of true simplicity. Accordingly we have drawn up the following articles (ruling our Lute community).

1. Members. These are the regular members of our community.

10) *Chên-shuo-hui*, originally the name of an official banquet during the Eastern Chin period. Ssū-ma Kuang thus called his literary gatherings, where elegant taste was preferred to lavish entertainment.



But also casual members are welcome, provided they are not vulgar. Only those who presume upon their dignity and boast of their wealth, and those without learning shall not be admitted.

2. Time. Every month there shall be one or two meetings, but only on holidays. Wind or rain shall make no difference. We shall gather between 9 and 11 in the forenoon, and separate between 5 and 7 in the afternoon; the meetings shall not be protracted into the night. Those who are late or fail to attend shall not be punished.

3. Place. The Anyō temple in Ushigome. If necessary this place may be changed, but only for a Buddhist temple or a country retreat, far from the noise of the multitude.

4. Implements. Tea and cakes, two Lutes and two Lute tables. If on a certain day there is present some one with much money, besides wine, fruit and some light dishes shall be allowed.

5. Business. Next to playing the Lute: compose poetry and read books, write characters or paint, sing songs or play on other stringed instruments and flutes, according to each member's individual taste. But when many people meet, the conversation is liable to become noisy. When the talk is about the Chinese Classics, or when literary compositions are discussed, this of course is always elegant. Also it will be allowed to talk about abstruse things, and to criticize vulgar customs. Only talk about official matters and on commercial affairs, this shall be strictly prohibited.

When this pact had been drawn up, I reported it to the master, and the master approved of it. But we consisted only of guests, and there was no host; thus, although we aspire at great simplicity, yet there must be some one who sees to the tea and cakes. A member said: "What about each time two members serving in turn?" The master said this was all right. Then I drew up the following list<sup>11)</sup> of members regularly attending our meetings.

Drawn up by Shinraku Tei, in 1789'

琴會約

昔日司馬溫公輩爲真率會，脫粟飯濁酒數行而已，可見先賢用心，雖在貴富節儉自守，不趨習俗奢侈也，今同社相約，倣而行之，蓋我輩貧而不能豐盛，又性質不能矯飾也，然則出于不得已而暗合真率意者也，仍設條例如左。

一會之人，同社人也，若不速客不甚俗者弗妨，但挾貴誇富不解字等人俱不許。

一會之期，一月一舉或二舉，惟以暇日，風雨不更期，已集酉散，不卜其夜，失期者不到者並不罰。

11) Nakane Kōtei, when copying out this pact, unfortunately left out this list, which will have contained valuable materials for our knowledge of the Japanese Lute players of that time.

一會之地，牛門外安養精舍也，若有故則換之必以佛院若別業，蓋避人家雜沓也。  
 一會之具，一茶一菓，琴二張几二坐，若當日頗有力者別供酒榼點心等不復妨。  
 一會之事，彈琴之餘，賦詩誦書，作字描畫，或唱詞曲弄絲竹，從各所好，但衆人相會，語言  
 易譁，或談經史論文章，固自佳，說鬼毀俗，又無不可，特不許說雲路談市井耳。  
 約成以告先生，先生曰善，而惟有貧無主，雖眞率誰能辨茶菓，同者曰，每會二人輪次以執  
 其事，可乎，先生曰善，於是舉常會者名，別列左。

己酉花期 新樂定誌

This pact is evidently made after the model of Chinese 'Covenants for the Spiritual Community of the Lute' (see above, ch. III, section 4).

The meetings in the Anyō-ji lasted for about twenty years. About 1825 most of its members had died or were dispersed, and only a few remained. Cf. the charming essay by Sugimoto Ka-en, translated below sub no. 23 of this list.

It was also Shinraku Kansō who, in 1813, wrote the *Kingaku-denjū-ryakukei*, mentioned above.

He traveled about widely in Japan in search for old Lutes, and he saw the relics of Shin-etsu in the Gion temple, at Mito. In 1797 he visited the old Chinese school, the Ashikaga-gakkō 足利學校, and there copied out a manuscript on the Lute by Hitomi Chikudō. Later he traveled to the Hokkaidō, the extreme north of Japan. At Hakodate he obtained an old beam from a government building; from this he made the upper board of a Lute. Then, at Matsumae 松前, he obtained a beam of wood called in the Matsumae dialect *Ramani* 蘭馬尼, said to mean *onkoto* 御琴 'honourable Lute'. Using this wood for the bottom board, he built a Lute, which he took with him to the island Etoro 擇捉島. That was in 1807, just when the Russian commander Khvostov made raids on Sachalin, Naihō and Shana;<sup>12)</sup> in the general confusion this Lute got lost. In 1811, however, Shinraku again found it in the house of a Japanese gentleman in West Japan; a Japanese ship that was in the north during the Russian raids had brought the instrument back! On this occasion Shinraku wrote an enthusiast note, stressing that the instrument of the Holy Sages is protected by Heaven against barbarian invasions and the vicissitudes of the ocean.

21. SUZUKI HYAKUTO 鈴木白藤, another prominent member of the Lute association of the Anyō temple.

22. SHINOMOTO CHIKUDO 篠本竹堂, also a pupil of Kodama Kūkū. His name was Ren 廉, his style Shi-on 子溫. He was known as a sinologue, who flourished in the beginning of the Meiwa period (明和, 1764-1771). Shinomoto was no mean Chinese stylist: Prof. Nakayama's

12) Cf. Sakamaki, *Japan and the United States 1790-1853*, in: Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, vol. XVII (1939), page 178.

manuscript album (cf. sources quoted above, sub d.) contains an essay by him, entitled *Hanshu-yayūki* 泛舟夜游記, which is written in excellent Chinese.

23. SUGIMOTO KA-EN 杉本樗園, named Chū-on 忠溫, style Ryōzai 良齋, a physician attached to the Shogunate. He was a prominent figure in the Lute association of the Anyōji. In 1828 he wrote a preface to a manuscript Lute handbook compiled by Yamamoto Tokuho (see below). There he refers to the meetings in the Anyōji, which by then had well nigh come to naught. As this preface gives a good insight into the spirit in which those meetings of Lute lovers were held, I translate it below.

‘In my younger years I studied the Lute under Kodama Kūkū, and the priest Ranshitsu (no. 11). Among the pupils of Kodama there were Shinomoto Chikudō (no. 22), Shinraku Kansō (no. 20), Okajima Rampo (no. 24), and Yamamoto Tokuho (no. 25), all members of our Lute Association. But Tokuho since his youth was most keen, and excelled all others in playing the Lute. Tokuho is named Rin, his literary name is Kakoku; he is a man from Ushigome, in Musashi (i.e. Edo).

Now I am a physician, I have to run hither and thither, and I can not follow my inclinations. Tokuho however has clearly written out the transmitted Lute tunes, and having made them into a handbook, asked me to add a few words by way of a preface.

The Lute stands for the music bequeathed by high antiquity. One must have hills and mountains in one's breast, and one's belly must be full of ink (i.e. one must be a cultured literatus), before one may touch the Lute. For its elegant tones can not enter the ears of a vulgar person. Now Tokuho's work is violent, his occupation is vulgar in the extreme, he being a so-called unmounted police-officer<sup>13</sup>. In the presence of others his conversation is tasteless, and his features are unattractive. But when Tokuho has one moment of spare time, he reads books and plays the Lute, happily giving himself over to this music. He would not exchange his lot for that of the greatest men in the realm. How could it be otherwise? His refined disposition and his aloofness from earthly things can be judged hereby.

Now I for one am old and stupid, thirty years I have toiled in official life. Going back in my thoughts to past times, I realize that the trees

13) 徒監察 *kachi-yoriki*. The *yoriki* were police officers in the service of the Bakufu. Constantly mixed up in brawls of unruly samurai, and implacable persecutors of all partisans of the opposition to the Tokugawa government, they formed a much feared but greatly despised class.

on the graves of Kūkū and Ranshitsu have grown, while all the members of our Lute association, one after the other, have passed away. Only I and Tokuho are still hale and hearty. Alas, human life is transitory, like a dream or like an illusion. Union and separation follow no fixed rules, sadness and mirth alternate with each other. Therefore I am glad that I and Tokuho are still in full health. This by way of a preface.

Written by Sugimoto Ryō, called Chū-on, in the autumn of 1828.

余少時學琴兒玉空空及釋蘭室，其從空空學也，篠本竹堂，新樂閑叟。岡島蘭甫，山本德甫，皆同社，而德甫少年銳往最善鼓云，德甫名鄰，號蝸殼，武州牛門人也，既而余爲刀圭，東西奔走，不能遂其好也，一日德甫，淨寫所傳琴曲，以爲譜，乞余言，夫琴者太古遺音也，其人胷有丘壑，腹貯墨汁，然後始可彈，何者，雅音不入俗耳也，德甫之職劇矣，其爲務也俗極矣，所謂徒監察者也，在他人，言語無味，面目可憎，而德甫乃得片時半日之閑，讀書彈琴，陶陶乎樂，即南面百城，不能以代焉，此豈無得而然乎哉，其胸襟之洒落不汙塵土，亦以是可知耳，余也暮鈍，勞々宣海三十年矣，追思往事空空蘭室墓木已拱，同社諸子亦相繼而下世矣，獨余與德甫安健耳，嗚呼，人生茫々，如夢如幻，聚散無常，悲觀頓異，而喜余之與德甫無恙也，於是乎言。

文政戊子仲秋杉本良忠溫撰

24. OKAJIMA RAMPO 岡島蘭甫，another prominent member of the Anyōji Lute association.

25. YAMAMOTO TOKUHO 山本德甫，one of the leaders of the Anyōji gatherings. Above (sub no. 23) the character of this police officer with elegant tastes has already been described. The manuscript albums of Prof. Nakayama give many examples of his literary activities. I quote one of his poems:

*Alone on a day in winter.*

“My humble door is securely fastened, seldom visitors come near it.  
I tend the dwarf plumbtree, that keeps me company in the twilight;  
The wind shakes its fragrant petals, and scatters them over the stone table.

And I see with astonishment that the blossoms form brilliant studs on my Lute.”

冬日獨坐

柴門深鎖屐踪稀，培養盆梅伴落暉，  
風散香葩零石案，訝看琴面點清微。

26. TAKAKURA YUI 高倉雄偉，a pupil of Yamamoto Tokuho, who collected the tunes taught by him.

27. SUGIURA BAIGAKU 杉浦梅岳，1734-1792; named Kai 恢，style Shiyō 士容; lit. names Baigaku and Gengai 元體. A man of scholarly interests from West Japan. Having come to Edo, he learnt the Lute from Onoda Tōzen (see no. 7). Returned to W. Japan, he there continued the tradition of the Lute.

28. NAGATA RADO 永田蘿堂，named Ikei 維馨，style Shiran 子蘭。



Originally a merchant, later he devoted himself entirely to the study of the Chinese Lute. He traveled extensively in Japan, everywhere searching for old Lutes, and teaching the art of playing it to a great number of scholars and noblemen. He started his studies of the Lute under Sugiura Baigaku, and continued them until his death, at the venerable age of 70.

29. DONKU 曇空, abbot of the Shōrinji 象林寺, in Fukagawa 深川, at Edo. Another pupil of Onoda Tōzen.

30. SETSUDO 雪堂, 1782-1842; named Chizan 痴山, lit. name Chōkai 鳥海. Chief priest of the Gansenji 願専寺, a temple in Dewa 出羽, north of Tokyo. He started his studies of the Chinese Lute in Nagasaki, and afterwards was taught by Radō (no. 28), and by Nakamura Tai-ō (no. 17). Round 1828 he settled down in Osaka, and assembled many pupils, teaching them the Chinese Lute and calligraphy.

31. INOUE CHIKU-ITSU 井上竹逸, called Genzō 玄藏, foremost pupil of Setsudō. He must have been a musician of importance, for he is mentioned in many sources. Unfortunately I could discover no further details about him.

32. MEGA YUSO 妻鹿友樵, 1826-1896; lit. names Teizai 貞齋, also Sanyū-zōro 三友草廬. A doctor of Chinese medicine, born at Osaka, in a wealthy family, where many old Chinese books and manuscripts had been preserved. He himself being a voracious reader, he greatly augmented this collection, which he left to the Sumiyoshi Shrine 住吉神社 at Osaka (later this shrine presented the books to the Osaka Library). He studied the Chinese Lute under Setsudō, and collected seven antique Lutes. He is further known as a painter and poet.

33. MATSUI YUSEKI 松井友石, named Ren 廉. A distinguished Lute player of Edo, pupil of Inoue Chiku-itsu. He possessed a dress of a Ming official, and used to play the Lute, clad in this garb.

34. IMAIZUMI YUSAKU 今泉雄作, 1850-1931; lit. name Mugai 無礙. The last great Japanese performer on the Chinese Lute, a well-known scholar and connoisseur. In 1877 he went to France, and worked in Paris under the great art-historian Guimet, in the Museum for Far Eastern Arts. After a stay of six years, he returned to Japan, and was employed in the Ministry of Education at Tokyo. He occupied various posts in the Japanese museum world, e.g. Director of the Fine Arts Department of the Imperial Museum at Tokyo, thereafter Director of the Okura Museum (*Okura-shūko-kan* 倉集古館). He learned the Lute from Inoue Chikuitsu, and eagerly collected materials for the history of the Chinese Lute in Japan. I have several manuscripts about the Chi-



nese Lute by him in my collection, and most of the books and manuscripts in Prof. Nakayama's collection bear his seal.

35. MANSO 萬宗, other name Chiku-an 竺菴, a Chinese priest who played the Lute; no further details known.

36. SATO MOSAI 佐藤茂齋, named Itchō 一張, a sinologue who learned the Lute from the priest Mansō. No source gives his name, but there is preserved a book on the Chinese Lute published by him, the *Kokin-seigi* 古琴精義, in 2 vols., publ. at Kyoto in 1746. To this book Mansō added a preface, which is printed in facsimile. This book gives a survey of the study of the Lute, illustrated with finely executed pictures. The greater part of these pictures are copied after those in the *Yang-ch'un-t'ang-ch'in-pu* (see above, chapter V, section 3).

#### *Geden, the outer tradition*

1. CHU SHUN-SHUI 朱舜水, Jap. Shu-shunsui, 1600-1682; name Tzû-yü 子璵, style Lu-hsü 魯嶼, lit. name Shun-shui. Famous Chinese refugee at the Court of Mito; he died just before Shin-etsu arrived there.<sup>14)</sup> When he came to Japan, he brought some Chinese Lutes with him. He himself apparently was not a Lute player, but, as all Chinese scholars (and especially those of the Ming period), he had made a study of the Lute, and knew how it was played. Chu Shun-shui gave on of his Lutes, a Ming specimen made by the Prince of I (I-wang 益王, see above Appendix III, figure XVI) to his Japanese pupil Andō Sei-an (安東省庵, 1620-1700), and he also presented him with some Chinese handbooks. These materials were preserved in Andō's family, and later they were studied by Murai Kinzan (see below).

2. P'AN WEI-CH'UAN 潘渭川, a Chinese scholar who passed through Nagasaki, and taught the Lute to Murai Kinzan.

3. MURAI KINZAN 村井琴山, 1733-1815; named Shun 椿, style Ta-nen 大年; lit. names Rokusei-dōjin 六清道人, and Seifuku-dōjin 清福

14) For Chu Shun-shui cf. E. W. Clement, *Chinese refugees of the seventeenth century in Mito*, in: Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, vol. XXIII. His complete works, under the title of *Shushunsui-sensei-bunshū* 朱舜水先生文集 were published between 1711-1715, at Edo, by the Mito clan. This beautiful block print, in 28 ch. and 1 appendix, now is scarce. Further there has been preserved a manuscript in 10 ch., entitled *Min-shuchōkun-shū* 明朱徵君集, compiled on the command of the Lord of Kaga 加賀. In 1912 Inaba Iwakichi 稻葉岩吉, on the basis of these two collections, published the *Shushunsui-zenshu* 朱舜水全集, in one stout volume. This is the most complete collection of materials regarding this interesting personality. In 1913 the Chinese scholar T'ang Shou-ch'ien 湯壽潛 published a Chinese edition of Chu Shun-shui's works, under the title of *Shun-shui-i-shu* 舜水遺書; this book is based upon Inaba's edition.

道人。A doctor attached to the Shogunate, notorious for his ugly face. He was a great Chinese scholar, and an eager book-collector. Author of numerous books on medical subjects. Full materials about his activities as a student of the Chinese Lute are to be found in his book *Kinzan-kin-roku* 琴山琴錄, in one vol., publ. in 1806, by the Kenkaku-zambō 劍閣山房. This nicely edited book opens with an autograph preface by the well-known Japanese scholar of Korean descent Ri-jun (李順, Japanese name Takamoto 高本, 1738-1813). Then follows a section called *Kindenki* 琴傳記, where the author relates how he studied the Chinese Lute. He was not satisfied with the tradition established by Shin-etsu, whom, being a priest, Kinzan deemed unworthy to touch the Lute. In 1785 in Nagasaki he met the Chinese scholar P'an Wei-ch'uan (see above), and from him learned the Lute. Therefore Kinzan considers himself the only Japanese who possesses the real Chinese Lute tradition. Then the author goes on to relate in great detail the history of the six Chinese Lutes in his collection; they were called Hsü-wei 續尾, Chiao-hsüeh 蕉雪, Lan-ssü 蘭思, Hsüan-hsiang 玄響, Ku-yen 古雁 and Hsiao-ssü 孝思. He says that later he continued his studies of the Chinese Lute on the basis of the materials of Chu Shun-shui, preserved in the family of Andō Sei-an. Further the book contains a number of Lute melodies in notation. It closes with a colophon by the author, and an autograph colophon by the doctor of Chinese medicine Oki Kojō (大城壺城, 1741-1811).

4. FEI CH'ING-HU 費晴湖, a Chinese at Nagasaki.

5. KIKUSHA-NI 菊舍(車)尼, the Nun Kikusha, 1753-1826; lay name Tagami Michi 田上ミチ. Her husband having died young, she became a nun, and devoted her whole life to writing poetry and practising the tea ceremony. She left a collection of Japanese and Chinese poetry, entitled *Taori-giku* 手折菊, to be found in the *Keishu-haika-zenshū* 閑秀排家全集, publ. in 1922 by Katsumine Shimpū 勝峰晉風. This nun was famous as a musician, and played the Chinese Lute. It is not clear where she first learned to play this instrument. But during a stay at Nagasaki, in 1796, she was taught by the Chinese Fei Ch'ing-hu. This Chinese also taught her how to read Chinese poetry in the Chinese way. The *Taori-giku* contains a poem presented to her by Fei Ch'ing-hu, together with a note, where Fei Ch'ing-hu praises her talents (*Keishu-haika-zenshū*, page 360).

# Index

Items in italics are titles of books, periodicals, etc. To personal names dates are added. Other names and technical expressions are briefly explained.

In this index are also listed omissions and some new data that were discovered during the reading of the proofs. Also there were embodied here a few items that do not occur in the book, but which were thought to be of interest to the reader. Cf. especially the items *gramophone records*, *Hsiu-ch'ih-lu*, *k'ung-ku-ch'uan-sheng*, *Lute dimensions*, and *yin-ch'i*.

For typographical reasons the *ü* and *ë* in Chinese, the long *o* and *u* in Japanese, and the long vowels and cerebral consonants in Sanskrit words are not indicated; for the correct spelling refer to the words as they occur in the text.

Items given in the Table of Contents are not listed here.

- Aalst, J. A. van, 164, 165  
 adrcya, becoming invisible, 48  
*A glimpse of Japanese ideals*, 182, 184  
 Ai, the Emperor, 38  
*Ak-hak-kwe-pom*, 100 (here inadvertently the Chinese transcription has been given instead of the Korean), 166  
*Alchemy and other chemical achievements of the ancient orient*, 45  
*A list of musical and other sound producing instruments of the Chinese*, 165  
 Amiot, Father, 3, 15, 163, 164  
*An annotated bibliography of selected Chinese reference works*, 117  
 Anathapindada, garden of, 51  
 Ando Ikuji, Jap. Lute player, 214  
 Ando Sei-an (1620-1700), 223, 224  
 Anyoji, temple at Edo where Japanese lovers of the Chinese Lute used to meet, 217-220  
 Arlington, L.C., 52  
 Asai To-nan (1706-1782), 214  
 Asaka Kaku (1656-1737), 202  
 Asano Fuzan, head of the Gionji at Mito, 204  
 astasiddhi, the 8 magical powers, 48  
*A Study of Chinese Alchemy*, 45  
 Backhouse, E., 189  
 Bakufu, common term for the government of the Shogun, 202, 211, 220  
 Beal, S., 51  
*Bibliographie Coréenne*, 166, 203  
 Biggerstaff, K., 117  
 birds associated with the Lute, v. *crane*, *geese*, *pheasant*, *phoenix*  
 biwa, Jap. four-stringed guitar, 182  
 Bland, J. O. P., 189  
 Bodde, D., 9  
 Boodberg, P., 15  
 Buddha, 51, 62, 65, 188  
 Buddhist Lute players, v. the Chinese priests *I-hai*, *K'ung-ch'en*, *Liang-yü Manso*, *Shin-etsu*, *Ying-shüh*, and the Japanese priests *Donku*, *Ranshitsu*, *Setsu-do*, *Shimpo-zenji*  
 Buddhists excluded from playing the Lute, in China: 43, 62, 65; in Japan: 207, 208  
*Caractères Chinois*, 12  
 Carter, Th. F., 181  
*Catalogue descriptif et analytique du musée instrumental du conservatoire royal de Bruxelles*, 165  
*Catalogue of the Imperial treasures in the Shosoin*, 182, 184, 186  
 cement for covering the body of a Lute, 176 sq.  
 Chan-t'an-ssu, temple in Peking, 52  
 Chang Ch'ao, Ch'ing scholar, 68  
 Chang Chi, famous physician of the Later Han period, 150  
 Chang Chih-ho, 8th century, 135

- Changes, Book of, v. *Yih-ching*  
 Chang Ho, 19th century Lute master, 172, 190  
 Chang Hung-ching, 150  
 Chang Jung-hsiu, Ming scholar, 179  
 Chang K'ung-shan, Ch'ing musician, 96  
 Chang Liang, died 187 B.C., 93  
 Chang-ngo, the Moon Goddess, 88  
 Chang Ta-ming, Ming musician, 118, 168, 217  
 Chang Ting-chi, (1768-1848), 175  
 Chang Ting-yü, Ming scholar, 200  
 Chang Tung-jen, Ch'ing mathematician, 171, 172  
 Chang Yu, Sung scholar, 15  
 Chang Yu-ho, contemporary Lute master, 20  
 Ch'ang-ch'ing, Lute melody, 94  
 Ch'ang-ti, ode of the Shih-ching, 6  
 Chao, the Empress, 185  
 Chao Wen, ancient music master, 8  
 Ch'ao Pi, T'ang scholar, 150  
 Chavannes, E., 136, 138, 140  
 Ch'en Chi-ju (1558-1639), 204  
 Ch'en Chih, Yüan period, 152  
 Ch'en Chung-chou, Ming scholar, 170  
 Ch'en Fu-yao, Ch'ing scholar, 140  
 Ch'en Teng-yüan, modern Chin. scholar, 170  
 Ch'en Wu-ch'ang, Ming scholar, 168  
 Ch'en Yang, 11th century, 2, 14  
 Cheng, odes of the Shih-ching, traditionally denoting lewd and vulgar music, 36, 37, 38, 80, 183; v. *Wei*  
 cheng, Chin. cither, IX, 8, 54, 197, 200, 204, appendix IV, plate II  
 Cheng-ho-shih, Lute model, 175  
 Cheng Hung, Han period, 90  
 cheng-wen, part of Lute notation, 119  
 Cheng Ying-sun, contemporary Lute master, ill. III, 124, 196  
 Ch'eng Hsiung, 17th century Lute master, 94  
*Ch'eng-i-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 72  
 Ch'eng-lien, famous old Lute master, 83  
 Ch'eng Yün-chi, 18th century, 72, 82  
 chess, playing—contrasted to playing the Lute, 46  
 Chi-i-chai, name of the author's library; derived from the Chinese appellation of the old Dutch Factory at Canton, ill. I, appendix III plate XIII, XIV  
 Ch'i, ancient state, 37  
 Ch'i-fu-jen, concubine of Han Kao-tsu, 8  
*Ch'i-yin-yün-chien*, book title?, 50  
*Chia-ku-wen-pien*, 6  
 Chiang Chih-lan, Ch'ing scholar, 68  
 Chiang Hsing-t'ao, lay name of Shin-etsu, 205  
 Chiang K'uei, Sung scholar, 8  
*Chiao-an-ch'in-pu*, 32  
*Chiao-ch'uang-chiu-lu*, 105  
 Chiao-ssu, sacrifice, 38  
 chiao-wei, part of a Lute; also name of a Lute, 99  
 Chiao-yeh-shih, Lute model, 175  
 Ch'iao Chung-wu, 171  
 ch'iao-jen, fuel gatherer, 90  
 Ch'iao-ko, Lute melody, 90  
*Chieh-tzu-yüan-hua-ch'uan*, IX, 140  
*Chien-chi*, 147  
 chien-tzu, abbreviated characters used in Lute notation, 4, 5, 27, 30, 31, 66, 114, 119, 120, 122, 125, 132, 170, 172  
 ch'ien, to inlay; special meaning in Lute terminology, 192  
*Ch'ien-ch'üeh-chü-lei-shu*, 68  
 Ch'ien-lung, the Emperor, 3  
 chih, agaric symbol of longevity, 19  
 chih-fa, finger technique, 30, 114, 115  
*Chih-sheng-shih-tien-li-yüeh-chi*, IX  
 ch'ih-nei, inscriptions inside a Lute, 179  
 Chikashige, M., modern Jap. scholar, 45  
*China Journal*, 174  
*Chin's first unifier*, 9  
*China under the Empress Dowager*, 189  
*Chinese refugees of the seventeenth century in Mito*, 223  
*Chinese music*, 164  
 chin-hsing, lit. 'golden stars', a poetical name for the 13 studs of a Lute, 58  
*Chin-ku-chi-kuan*, 96  
*Chin-p'ing-mei*, 148  
 Ch'in, ancient state, 37; the cither of—, 54  
*Ch'in-ching*, 61, 62, 65, 69, 118, 168, 177, 178, 217  
*Ch'in-ch'ing-ying*, 28, 53  
 ch'in-ch'ü-ko-tz'u, popular songs set to the Lute, 42  
*Ch'in-ch'ü-pu-lu*, 81  
*Ch'in-fu*, 53, 185  
*Ch'in-hsieh-hsin-sheng*, 211  
*Ch'in-hsüeh-ju-men*, 172, 190, ill III



- Ch'in-hsüeh-ts'ung-shu*, 9, 17, 27, 32, 46, 92, 96, 132, 169, 181  
*Ch'in-huang*, 104  
*Ch'in-juan-ch'i-meng*, v. *Ch'in-yüan-ch'i-meng*  
*ch'in-pu*, v. *Lute handbooks*  
*Ch'in-pu-ho-pi-ta-ch'üan*, 171  
*Ch'in-se-ho-pu*, by Ch'ing Jui, 8, 18, 30, 56  
*Ch'in-se-ho-pu*, by Yang Tsung-chi, 9, 169  
*ch'in-she*, v. *Lute, spiritual community of—*  
*Ch'in-sheng-ching-wei*, 14  
*Ch'in-sheng-shih-liu-fa*, 104 sq.  
*Ch'in-shih*, by Chu Ch'ang-wen, 28, 54, 67, 167, 170  
*Ch'in-shih*, by Chou Ch'ing-yün, 32, 49, 169  
*ch'in-shih*, v. *Lute chamber*  
*Ch'in-shih-huang-ti*, the First Emperor (246-210 B.C.), 9  
*Ch'in-shu*, 80  
*Ch'in-shu-ts'un-mu*, 32, 169  
*ch'in-tan*, Lute altar, 49  
*Ch'in-tao*, 34, 53  
*Ch'in-tsao*, 5, 40, 53, 79, 81, 91, 96, 100, 167  
*ch'in-tung*, v. *Lute pages*  
*Ch'in Wei-han*, Lute player of the 19th century, 32  
*Ch'in-yo*, 68  
*Ch'in-yü-man-lu*, 17, 169  
*Ch'in-yüan-ch'i-meng*, 164, 194  
*Ching*, the Emperor (156-141 B.C.), 38, 54  
*Ching*, ancient music master, 151  
*Ch'ing-hui-tien-t'u*, 12  
*Ch'ing Jui*, Ch'ing scholar, 8  
*Ch'ing-lien-fang-ch'in-ya*, IV, 58, 68, 135, 138, 145, 149, 168, 183  
*ch'ing-shang-yüeh*, a class of semi-Chinese music, 39  
*Ch'ing-shih-lieh-chuan*, 189  
*Ch'iu Chih-lu*, Ch'ing scholar, 8  
*Ch'iu-hung*, Lute melody, 194  
*Cho-keng-lu*, 176  
*Chou Ch'ing-yün*, contemporary scholar, 32, 169  
*Chou-hou-shen-ching*, 194  
*Chou-li*, 5  
*Chou Lu-feng*, Lute master of the 18th century, 171, 191, 192  
*Chou Yü-tu*, Ming painter, 168  
*Chu Ch'ang-fang*, v. *Lu-wang*  
*Chu Ch'ang-wen* (1041-1100), 54, 167, 170  
*Chu Ch'i-ch'ien*, contemporary scholar, 176, 177  
*chu-chia-sheng*, old musical term, 92  
*Chu Ch'üan*, v. *Ning-wang*  
*Chu Feng-chieh*, Lute master of the 19th century, 29, 172, 175, 190  
*Chu Hou-hsiao*, v. *Heng-wang*  
*Chu Hou-hsüan*, v. *I-wang*  
*Chu Hsi* (1130-1200), 17, 84  
*Chu Hsiang-hsien*, Liang period, 92  
*Chu Shun-shui* (1600-1682), 194, 202, 205, 223, 224  
*Chu Tsai-yü*, Ming prince, 66, 164, 193  
*Chu T'ung-chün*, v. *Chu Feng-chieh*  
*Ch'u-ming-kuang*, Lute melody, 154  
*Chuang An-hsiang*, lady Lute expert of the Sung period, 153  
*Chuang Chen-feng*, Ming musician, 211  
*Chuang-tzu*, the old philosopher and the work connected with his name, 7, 8, 44, 45, 65, 90, 108, 111, 155  
*Chuang-tzu-meng-tieh*, Lute melody, 45  
*Ch'un-chu-chi-wen*, 185  
*Ch'un-ch'ü*, v. *Lü-shih-ch'un-ch'ü*  
*Ch'un-ts'ao-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 96, 172  
*Chung-ch'i*, v. *Chung-tzu-ch'i*  
*Chung-ho-ch'in-shih*, name of the author's library, adopted when he obtained a Lute bearing the name Chung-ho, made by the Ming prince of Lu, V, 193; appendix III, plate XIII, XIV  
*Chung-ni-shih*, Lute model, 175  
*Chung-shan*, a mountain famous for its jade, 186  
*Chung-tzu-ch'i*, famous ancient connoisseur of music, 73, 74, 95, 96, 171, 186  
*Chung-yung*, 83, 111  
*Chü-she-yo*, 69  
*Ch'ü Yüan*, 4th century B.C., 93  
*Ch'ü-yüan-wen-tu*, Lute melody, 93  
*Chüan*, ancient music master, 136-140  
*cither*, meaning it has in this book, II  
*Clement*, E. W., 204, 223  
*coda*, v. *shou-yin*, *wei*, p. 86  
*coffin boards* used for building Lutes, 176  
*Confucius*, 7, 37, 83, 90, 91, 92  
*Courant*, M., 20, 92, 93, 136, 166, 203  
*Couvreur*, S., 7, 16  
*cow-hair cracks*, v. *niu-mao*



- cracked-ice bursts, v. *ping-lieh*  
 crane, associated with the Lute, 46, 51,  
 57, 77, 89, 120, 134, 135-140, 188
- dharani, magic formula, 50  
 Donku, Jap. Lute player, 222  
 Doré, H., 147  
 dragon, associated with the Lute, 81, 100,  
 101, 102, 115, 122, 195  
 dragon pond, aperture in the bottom board  
 of the Lute, 80, 100, 176, 180, 183,  
 191, 195, 196  
 dragon's gums, part of a Lute, 98
- Eckardt, A., 166  
 Edo, old name for Tokyo, 202, 205, 208,  
 211, 213, 215, 221, 222  
 eight sorts of musical instruments, 72,  
 198  
 erh-hu, two-stringed violin, 1, 2, 93  
*Essai historique sur la musique classique des*  
*Chinois*, 20, 166  
*Essays in Zen Buddhism*, 127
- fa-ch'ü, Buddhist chant, 52  
 Fa-hsien, the famous priest (4-5th century),  
 51  
*Fan-i-ch'in-pu-yen-chiu*, 20, 132  
 Fan Li, Ch'un-ch'iu period, 61  
 fan-li, introductory notes to Chinese books,  
 29  
 fan-sheng, 'floating sounds', 59, 85,  
 128, 131  
 Farmer, H. G., 176  
 Fei Ch'ing-hu, a Chinese at Nagasaki, 224  
 feng-chao, v. *phoenix pool*  
 Feng-huang, name of a Lute, 185  
 feng-huang-hsiao, flute, 100  
*Feng-su-t'ung-i*, 5, 41, 71, 208  
 Ferguson, John C., 87, 174  
 Forke, A., 45, 130  
 Fox Strangeways, A. H., 126  
 Franke, O., 9  
 frozen condition of the mind, 44, 57, 109  
*Frühling und Herbst des Lü Bu-we*, 23  
 fu-ch' in, kind of cipher, 8  
 Fu-hsi, the mythical Emperor, 5, 40,  
 79, 80, 110, 192  
 Fujita Toko (1806-1855), 206  
 Fujiwara Sadatoshi (807-867), 204  
*Fu-ku-pien*, 15  
 fu-wen, part of Lute notation, 119
- Garuda, 188  
 geese, associated with the Lute, 7, 91, 100  
*Gempei-seisuiiki*, 201  
*Gems of Chinese literature*, 89  
*Genji-monogatari*, 198, 200, 201  
*Genji-monogatari-no-ongaku*, 201  
*Geschichte des Chinesischen Reiches*, 9  
 Giles, H., 89  
 Giles, L., 186  
 Gionji, temple at Mito, 205, 219  
 glissando, 50, 112  
*Goteki-sensei-kinden-setsu*, 213  
 Gramophone records of Lute music :  
   Pathé, art music 2048, no. 34801 a-b, the  
   melody *Ch'ang-men-yüan*, played by the  
   Lute master Cheng Yingsun ; Pathé  
   instrumental 1741, no. 34625 b, the  
   melody *Yang-kuan-san-tieh*, played by  
   the musician Wei Chung-yüeh
- Granet, M., 36  
 Grosjean, J. F., 176  
*Gushun-kinki*, 206  
*Gyokudo-kinshi-ibokushu*, 216  
*Gyokudo-zosho-kinfu*, 209, 215  
*Gyoyusho*, 198
- Hakurakuten-to-nihon-bungaku*, 201  
 Han Chiang, Ch'ing scholar, 51, 52  
*Han-shih-wai-ch'uan*, 41  
*Han-shu*, 61, 101  
*Han-shu-i-wen-chih*, 28  
*Han-shu-li-yüeh-chih*, 38  
*Han-t'ang-pi-shih*, 193  
 Hashimoto Kansetsu, modern Jap. painter,  
 216  
 Harada, J., modern Jap. scholar, 182,  
 184, 186, 196  
 harp (k'ung-hou) 54  
*Harvard Journal of Asiatic studies*, 15, 187  
*Hayagriva, the Mantrayanic aspect of*  
*horse-cult in China and Japan*, 50  
 Hayashi Hoko (1691-1732), 211  
 Hayashi Jussai (1768-1841), 168, 202  
 Hayashi, K., modern Jap. musicologist,  
 38, 39, 62  
 Hayashi Shunsai (1618-1680), 212  
 Hei-ho (Black crane), name of a Lute, 153  
 Heng-hua, name of a Lute, 212  
 Heng-wang, named Hou-hsiao, Prince of  
   Heng (Ming period), 193-196, 212  
 History, Book of, v. *Shu-ching*

- Hitomi Bosai (1638-1696), 202  
 Hitomi Chikudo, Jap. Lute player, 206, 211, 212, 213, 219  
 Hitomi Togen, Jap. Lute player, 212, 213  
*Hobogirin*, dictionnaire encyclopédique du Bouddhisme d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises, red. en chef P. Demiéville, Tokyo 1929, 49, 127  
 Ho-chien Hsien-wang, Han prince, 38, 54  
 Ho Liang-chün, 16th century, 58  
*Ho-ling-lu*, 135  
 Honnoji, temple at Kyoto, 215  
 Ho-pai, Indian priest-musician, 50  
 Horinji, temple at Kyoto, 216  
*Ho-shih-yü-lin*, 58  
 Ho Yüan, 11th century, 185  
 Horyuji, temple at Nara, 203, 214  
*Hou-han-shu*, 90  
 Hsi-ching-tsa-chi, 184, 185  
*Hsi-hsiang-chi*, IX, 19  
 Hsi K'ang (223-262), 53, 55, 152, 153, 154, 186  
 Hsiang, Prince (571-540 B.C.), 7  
 Hsiang, the river, 91, 94  
*Hsiang-ho-ching*, 140  
 Hsiang-ling, Lute melody, 81  
 Hsiang Yüan-pien (1525-1590), 105, 174, 175, 196  
 Hsiao, the river, 91, 94  
 hsiao-chuan, the small seal script, 9, 12, 13  
 Hsiao-hsiang-shui-yün, Lute melody, 94  
 hsiao-kai, small regular script, 192  
 hsiao-tzu, collating, 31  
*Hsieh-ch'in-shih-wen-ch'ao*, 17  
 Hsieh Chuang (421-466), 101  
 Hsieh Fang-te (1226-1289), 18  
 Hsien-ch'ih, music attributed to Yao, 192  
 hsien-jen-chien, part of a Lute, 99  
 Hsin-yüeh, v. *Shin-etsu*  
*Hsiu-ch'ih-lu*, 176; cf. also the note on this book by A. W. Hummel, in *Report of the Librarian of Congress*, division of Chinese a. Japanese literature, 1930-31, p. 267  
*Hsiu-ju-chi*, IX  
*Hsiu-ling-yao-chih*, 105  
 Hsiung P'eng-lai, Yüan scholar, 8  
 Hsü Chen, Han period, 11  
 Hsü Ch'i, famous Lute master of the Ch'ing period, 171  
 Hsü Ching, Ch'ing scholar, 12  
 Hsü Chün, Ch'ing scholar, 171  
 Hsü Hung, Lute master of the Ming period, 104  
 Hsü Shih-ch'i, Ming Lute master, IX  
*Hsü-sou-shen-chi*, 135  
 Hsüan, Emperor (73-49 B.C.), 28, 54  
 hsüan, ancient ocarina, IX, 156, 157  
 hsüan-ho, dark crane, 135-140  
*Hsüeh-chai-chan-pi*, 19  
*Hsüeh-ch'in-ch'ien-shuo*, 20  
 Hsün-tien, Lute melody, 81  
 Hsün-tzu, the old philosopher, 81, 83  
 Hu-chia-shih-pa-p'o, Lute melody, 92, 154  
 Hu Wen-huan, Ming scholar, 117  
 Hu-yüeh, Central-asiatic music, 38  
*Hua-ching*, 140  
 Huai-nan-tzu, the old philosopher, 23, 28, 40, 41  
 Huai Ta-pu, son of Jui Lin, 189  
 Huan I, Chin period, 93  
 Huan T'an, Han scholar, 34, 53, 54  
 Huang Chen, Ch'ing scholar, 171  
 Huang Ch'eng, Ming scholar, 176  
 Huang Hsien, 15th century, 164  
*Huang-hsien-ch'in-pu*, v. *Wu-kang-ch'in-pu*  
 huang-men-ku-ch'ui-yüeh, a class of Palace music, 38  
 Huang-ti, the mythical Emperor, 80, 136, 137  
 Hui, the Emperor (194-188 B.C.), 37  
 hui, the 13 studs of a Lute, *passim*, but especially 119, and ill. Ia  
*Hui-ch'in-shih-chi*, 20  
 Hui-tsung, the Emperor (1101-1125), 46  
 hyon-kem, Korean Lute, 203  
 I-chiao-chin-li, Lute melody, 93  
 I-ching, v. *Yih-ching*  
 I-hai, priest-musician of the Sung period, 49  
 I-hsin, name of a Lute, 100  
 I-lan, Lute melody, 91  
 I-li, Book of Ceremonies, 9  
 Imai Kojiro, 205  
 Imaizumi Yuseki (1850-1931), 222  
 I mountain, on the slopes of which grow the trees from which Lutes are made, 69, 79, 191, 192  
*Imperial Catalogue* (Ssu-k'u-ch'üan-shu-tsung-mu), 105, 167, 168, 170, 194,

- 200  
 Inaba Iwakichi, modern Jap. scholar, 223  
*I-nien-lu*, 105  
 Inoue Chiku-itsu, Jap. Lute player, 222  
*In search of old Peking*, 52  
 Ishikawa Jozan (1583-1672), 204  
 I-wang, named Hou-hsüan, Prince of I (Ming dynasty), 193-196, 223  
*I-yü-chih*, 194  
  
*Japan and the United States*, 219  
 Japanese physicians who were experts on the Chinese Lute, v. *Hitomi Chikudo*, *Katsuragawa Getchi*, *Mega Yuso*, *Mura; Kinzan*, *Sugimoto Ka-en*, *Suzuki Ran-en*, *Taki Rankei*  
 Japanese songs played on the Chinese Lute, 209, 215  
 Jetavana, Buddha's favourite abode, 51  
 Johnson, O. S., 45  
*Journal Asiatique*, 45, 135, 140  
*Journal of the R. A. S. of Great-Britain a, Ireland*, 176  
 Juan Yüan (1764-1849), 175  
 Jui Lin (1810-1874), 189  
*Jui-ying-t'u-chi*, 136  
 jukan, sinologues in the service of the Bakufu, 208, 212  
  
 kachi-yoriki, unmounted police-officer of the Bakufu, 220  
*Kakkaron, a Japanese echo of the Opium War*, 211  
 kalpadruma, 188  
 kampan, Jap. official edition, 167  
*K'ang-hsi-tzu-tien*, 12, 13  
*Kanz-al-tuhaf*, 176  
 Kao Lien, Ming period, 168, 170, 178  
 Kao-shan-liu-shui, Lute melody, 67, 95, 96, 192  
 Kao-tsu, the Emperor (206-195 B. C.), 8  
*K'ao-p'an-yü-shih*, 58, 59, 62, 67, 140, 167  
 Karlgren, B., 11  
 Kashuya Shichibei, Jap. Lute player, 213  
 Katsumine Shimpu, modern Jap. scholar, 224  
 Katsuragawa Getchi (1751-1809), 216  
*Keishu-haika-zenshu*, 224  
*Keng-hsin-yü-ts'e*, 194  
 Kibat, O., 148  
 Kikusha, the nun (1753-1826), 224  
  
*Kinden-setsu*, 213  
 kingaku, Jap. reading of *ch'in-hsüeh*, 197, 208, 210  
*Kingaku-denju-ryakkei*, 210, 219  
*Kingaku-keimo*, 198, 214  
*Kingaku-nyumon-zukai*, 199  
*Kingaku-taisho*, 204  
*Kinkyoku-soden-keifu*, 211  
*Kinzan-kinroku*, 207, 214, 224  
 kiri-wood, 207  
*Ko-chih-ts'ung-shu*, 117  
 Koda Shisen (died 1758), 216, 217  
 Kodama Kizan (1801-1835), 216  
 Kodama Kuku (1734-1811), 200, 211, 213, 216-220, 221  
 Ko Gentai (1640-1732), 212  
 K'o-ch'uang-yeh-hua, Lute melody, 96  
*Kochuhen*, 12  
 Kofuku-ji, temple at Nagasaki, 205  
 Kojima Hyaku-ichi, Jap. Lute player, 212, 216  
*Kokin-seigi*, 118, 223  
*Koreanische Musik*, 166  
 Komazawa, Jap. Lute player, 213  
*Kotei-ibun*, 211  
*Koten-kanko-kai*, 166  
 koto, the Japanese cither, 8, 197, 207, 209, 215, 216  
 Kuhn, F., 148  
*Ku-chin-chu*, 136  
*Ku-ch'in-shu*, 153  
 Ku-ch'in-yin, Lute melody, 154, 165  
 ku-cho, antique simplicity, 180 (for another good example v. the Lute inscription on p. 163)  
 Ku Hsiu, Ch'ing scholar, 167  
*Ku-huan-she-yo*, 69  
 Ku I-chiang, Ming musician, 170  
*Ku-i-ts'ung-shu*, 27  
 Ku Pa, ancient music master, 8, 81  
 Ku T'ien-su, Ming scholar, 215  
 ku-wen, ancient writing, 12, 13  
*K'u-mu-ch'an-ch'in-pu*, IX, 52, 190  
 Kuan-chü, ode of the Shih-ching, 6;  
 Lute melody, 93  
 kuan-chüeh, part of a Lute, 100  
 Kuan-tzu, ancient philosopher, 46  
 Kuan-han-yu, Lute melody, 88  
 K'uang, ancient music master, 136  
*Kuei-ch'ü-lai-ts'u*, famous essay by T'ao Ch'ien; Lute melody, 94  
 K'uei, ancient music master, 7

- K'un-lun mountains, 136, 191  
 K'un-shan-yü, name of a Lute, 189 sq.  
 kung-ch'ih, a simple kind of Chinese notation, 132, 172  
 Kung Yün-jang, Chinese at Nagasaki, 213  
 K'ung-ch'en, priest-musician of the Ch'ing period, 52, 190  
 k'ung-hou, v. *harp*  
 k'ung-ku-ch'uan-sheng, 128. This term may also be explained as referring to a literary game, more commonly known as *hsi-ku-she-tzu*; cf. T. Watters, *Essays on the Chinese language*, in *The China Review*, vol. V (1876), p. 80 and 81, who describes it as 'the pronunciation of a character is made up of initial, final and tone. A system is adopted of, say, 33 initials, 22 finals and 5 tones. The person beginning the conversation taps on the table a certain number of times and this gives the initial for the first word of the sentence. He then taps again, and the number struck yields the final, while the tone is given by the third series of taps. This device is chiefly used as an amusement among the literati'. That this is the correct explanation would seem to appear from the fact that some ch'in-pu illustrate the term by a picture of two smiling old men, standing some distance apart and clapping in their hands.  
 K'ung-tzu chia-yü, 7, 155  
 K'ung Yen (268-320), 54, 167  
 Kuo-ch'ao-ch'i-hsien-lei-cheng, 8  
 Kuo Mao-ch'ien, Sung scholar, 42  
 Kuo Mien, Sung musician, 94  
 Kuo Tzu-chang, 16th century, 147  
 Kuo Yü-chai, Ch'ing scholar, 66  
 laghima, levitation, 48  
 Laloy, L., 20, 23, 104, 165  
 La musique chinoise, 20, 104, 165  
 La musique en Chine, 20, 165  
 Lan-t'ing Gathering, 187, 188  
 Lan-t'ing-hsü, 187  
 Lao-tzu, the ancient philosopher, 65  
 Legge, James, 6, 7, 37, 41, 90, 111, 112  
 Lei family, famous Lute builders during the T'ang period, 53  
 Leng Ch'ien, musician and painter of the 15th century, 103-105  
 Leng-hsien, v. *Leng Ch'ien*  
*Les procédés de nourrir le principe vital dans la religion taoïste ancienne*, 45  
 Lewisohn, W., 52  
 Li-chi, Book of Rites, 5, 7, 16, 22, 41, 69  
 Li Chi, contemporary scholar, 27, 169  
 Li Chia-yin, 6th century, 153  
 Li Chih-hsien, wife of Ch'ing Jui, 8  
 Li Ch'ing, Ming author, 135  
 Li Hsiang-shih, 19th century Lute master, 190  
 Li-hsing-yüan-ya, 200  
 Li-sao, the famous poem by Ch'ü Yüan; Lute melody, 94  
 Li Shao-chi, Ming painter, 168  
 li-shu, chancery script, 13, 191, 192, 216  
 Li Ssu, died 208 B. C., 9, 11, 12  
 Li-tai-cho-lu-hua-mu, 87  
 Li T'ai-po (701-762), 110  
 Li T'ing-ching, Ch'ing scholar, 171, 172  
 Li Wen-fang, Ming scholar, 171  
 Li Yen-nien, 2nd century B.C., 38  
 Li Yu, 2nd century, 183  
 Li Yung (678-747), 191, 192  
 Liang Chang-chü (1775-1849), 175  
 Liang-yü, priest-musician of the Sung period, 49  
 Liao-shih-yüeh-chih, 39  
 Lieh-hsien-chuan, 135  
 Lieh-tzu, the old philosopher and the work connected with his name 8, 44, 45, 46, 57, 79, 81, 95, 109, 186  
 Lieh-tzu-yü-feng, Lute melody, 45, 88  
 lien-ch'i, Taoist exercise for regulating breathing, 46  
 Lien-t'ing-shih-erh-chung, 167  
 Lin Pu (967-1028), 46, 138  
 Lin Yu-lin, Ming scholar, IV, 168  
 Lin Yutang, 104, 110, 187  
 Ling, Duke (534-493 B.C.), 136-140  
 Ling-ho, Lute name, 215  
 Ling-hsü-yin, Lute melody, 89  
 Liu Ch'eng-fu, modern Chin. scholar, 92  
 Liu Chi (1311-1375), 96  
 Liu Chih-fang, Sung musician, 46  
 Liu Hsiang (77-6 B.C.), 72  
 Liu Hsin (died 23 A.D.), 185  
 Liu I-hsien, Chin. interpreter at Nagasaki, 215  
 Liu Jung-chai, 19th century, 190  
 Liu-shu-ching-yün, 11



- Liu-shui, Lute melody, 18, 19, 96, 124  
 Liu Ta-jen, Ming scholar, 168  
 Liu Tsung-yüan (773-819), 67, 91, 143  
 Liu Yü, Ming scholar, 48, 171  
 lo-hsia-shih, Lute model, 175  
 Lu, ancient state, 37, 91  
 Lu Chün, (died 172), 13  
 Lu-ming, an ode of the Shih-ching, 6 ;  
     Lute melody, 67, 94  
 Lu-wang, named Ch'ang-fang, Prince of  
     Lu (Ming dynasty), 193-196  
*Lü-ch'i-hsin-sheng*, IX  
 Lü Lan-ku, Ming scholar, 171  
*Lü-lü-cheng-i*, 164  
*Lü-lü-ching-i*, 164  
 Lü Pu-wei, 22, 23, 28  
*Lü-shih-ch'un-ch'ü*, 7, 22, 95  
*Lü-yin-wei-k'ao*, 9  
*Lun-yü*, 7, 30, 37, 112  
*Lung-ch'eng-lu*, 67, 143  
 lung-ch'ih, v. *dragon-pond*  
 lung-ti, flute, 100  
 lung-yin, part of a Lute, 98, 192  
 Lung-yin-ch'iu-shui, name of a Lute,  
     195  
 Lute altar, v. *ch'in-tan*  
 Lute builders, v. *Heng-wang*, *I-wang*, *Lei*  
     *family*, *Lu-wang*, *Ning-wang*  
 Lute chamber, 67  
 Lute dimensions: the length of a Lute is  
     usually about 120 cm.; the instrument  
     on ill. I measures 120 cm., that on ap-  
     pendix III, plate I, 118 cm., plate II,  
     119 cm., plate XIII, 118 cm.  
 Lute handbooks, v. *Ch'eng-i-t'ang-ch'in-  
     pu*, *Chiao-an-ch'in-pu*, *Ch'in-ching*, *Ch'in-  
     hsieh-hsin-sheng*, *Ch'in-hsieh-ju-men*,  
*Ch'in-pu-ho-pi-ta-ch'üan*, *Ch'in-se-ho-pu*,  
*Ch'in-yüan-ch'i-meng*, *Ch'un-ts'ao-t'ang-  
     ch'in-pu*, *K'u-mu-ch'an-ch'in-pu*, *Li-  
     hsing-yüan-ya*, *Lü-ch'i-hsin-sheng*, *Po-  
     ya-hsin-fa*, *Pu-hsü-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, *Shen-  
     chi-pi-pu*, *Shu-huai-tsao*, *Sung-feng-ko-  
     ch'in-pu*, *Sung-hsien-kuan-ch'in-pu*, *Ta-  
     huan-ko-ch'in-pu*, *T'ai-ku-i-yin*, *Te-yin-  
     t'ang-ch'in-pu*, *T'ien-wen-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-  
     ch'eng*, *Tzu-yüan-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, *Wen-  
     hui-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, *Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-  
     pu*, *Wu-kang-ch'in-pu*, *Yang-ch'un-t'ang-  
     ch'in-pu*.—Japanese handbooks for the  
     Chinese lute, v. *Gyokudo-zosho-kinfu*,  
*Kingaku-keimo*, *Kingaku-nyumon-zukai*,  
*Kingaku-taiisho*, *Kinzan-kinroku*, *Kokin-  
     seigi*, *Toko-kinfu*  
 Lute, lady experts on —, v. *Chuang An-  
     hsiang*, *Li Chih-hsien*, *Kikusha*, and the  
     reference on p. 170, last line of first  
     paragraph  
 Lute melodies, v. *Ch'ang-ch'ing*, *Ch'iao-ko*,  
*Ch'iu-hung*, *Ch'u-ming-kuang*, *Chuang-  
     tsu-meng-tieh*, *Ch'ü-yüan-wen-tu*, *Hsi-  
     ang-ling*, *Hsiao-hsiang-shui-yün*, *Hsün-  
     tien*, *Hu-chia-ssu-pa-p'o*, *I-chiao-chin-li*,  
*I-lan*, *Kao-shan-liu-shui*, *K'o-ch'uang-  
     yeh-hua*, *Ku-ch'in-yin*, *Kuan-chü*, *Kuang-  
     han-yu*, *Kuei-ch'ü-lai-tz'u*, *Li-sao*, *Lieh-  
     tsu-yü-feng*, *Ling-hsü-yin*, *Liu-shui*,  
*Lu-ming*, *Mei-hua-san-nung*, *Mo-tzu-  
     pei-ssu*, *Na-lo-fa-ch'ü*, *Nan-feng*, *Ou-  
     lu-wang-chi*, *P'ing-sha-lo-yen*, *Shen-jen*,  
*Shih-t'an*, *Ssu-ch'in*, *T'eng-wang-ko*,  
*Yang-ch'un*, *Yen-kuo-heng-yang*, *Yu-  
     lan*  
 Lute names, v. those enumerated on p. 102  
     and p. 224, and further v. *Chiao-wei*,  
*Feng-huang*, *Hei-ho*, *Heng-hua*, *I-hsin*,  
*K'un-shan-yü*, *Ling-ho*, *Lung-yin-ch'iu-  
     shui*, *Shuang-t'ien-ling-to*, *Su-wang*,  
*T'ienlai*, *Wan-ho-sung*, *Wu-ming*, *Yü-shun*  
 Lute pages, special servants for carrying  
     the Lute, 65, and v. frontispice  
 Lute, spiritual community of—, 68, 69  
*Mahavairocana-sutra*, 49  
 Mahillon, V. Ch., 165  
 mandala, magic circle, 49  
 Manso, Chin. priest in Japan, 208, 223  
 Mantrayana, late Buddhist school, 48, 49,  
     50, 51, 127  
*Manuel des superstitions chinoises*, 147  
 Ma Yung (79-166), 22, 55  
 Mao Chin (1599-1659), 117  
 Mao Chung-weng, Sung musician, 45,  
     88, 89  
 Mao Min-chung, Yüan musician, 45, 90  
 Maspéro, H., 45  
 Matsui Yuseki, Jap. Lute player, 222  
 Matsuoka, A., modern Jap. scholar, 186  
 Mega Yuso (1826-1896), 222  
 mei-hua, v. *tuan-wen*  
 Mei-hua-san-nung, Lute melody, 93  
*Mémoires concernant l'Asie orientale*, 7  
*Mémoires concernant les Chinois*, 3, 163  
 Mencius, 41, 83, 190



- Meng Tien (died 210 B. C.), 8  
*Me Ti des Sozialethikers u. seiner Schüler philosophische Werke*, 130  
*Mi Fu on inkstones*, IV, 181  
 Miao Ch'üan-sun (1844-1919), 32, 169  
*Mien-ch'in-hsieh-hsüeh-yüeh-lu*, 19  
 Mimura Seisaburo, modern Jap. scholar, 213  
*Ming-hua-lu*, 168  
*Ming-shih*, 117, 118, 168, 194  
*Ming-shih-tsung*, 170, 194  
*Ming-tz'u-tsung*, 177, 168  
*Min-shuchokun-shu*, 223  
 Mitsukuni (1628-1700), 20, 205  
 Mizuno Heiji, modern Jap. scholar, 201  
*Mo-ch'ih-p'ien*, 167  
 Moku-an (1611-1684), 205  
 Mononobe Mokei, v. *Ogiu Sorai*  
*Montoku-jitsuroku* 197  
*Monumenta Serica*, 211  
 Mo-tzu, the old philosopher, 130  
 Mo-tzu-pei-ssu, Lute melody, 130  
 Moule, A.C., 165  
 Munakata Ro-oku, Jap. sinologue, 203  
 Murai Kinzan, Jap. Lute player, 207, 223, 224  
*My Country and my people*, 110  
  
 Nagata Rado, Jap. Lute player, 221-222  
 Naikaku-bunko, Library of the Cabinet at Tokyo, 170  
 Nakagawa Chu-ei, official at Nagasaki, 202  
 Nakamura Taio, Jap. Lute player, 216, 222  
 Nakane Hakuzan (1662-1733), 216  
 Nakane Shuku (1839-1913), 211, 217, 218  
 Nakayama K., modern Jap. scholar, 211, 219, 221, 223  
 Na-lo-fa-ch'ü, Lute melody, 52  
 Nan-feng, Lute melody, 41, 72, 80  
 Narada, 52  
 Narayana, 52  
 Naropa, 52  
*Nihon-joko-ongakushi*, 201  
*Nihon-ongaku-kowa*, 86, 201  
 ni-ku, archaizing, 39  
 Ning-wang, named Ch'üan, prince of Ning (Ming dynasty), 164, 170, 193, 194  
 Ni Tsan (1301-1374), 57, 58  
 niu-mao, v. *tuan-zen*  
 No, an ode from the Shih-ching, 6  
  
*Notes de bibliographie chinoise*, 27  
 Nukina Kai-oku (1778-1863), 212  
  
 Obaku-sect, 205, 209  
 ocarina, v. *hsüan*  
 Odes, Book of, v. *Shih-ching*  
 Ogiu Sorai (1666-1728), 27, 204  
 Okajima Rampo, Jap. Lute player, 220, 221  
 Oki Kojo (1741-1811), 224  
*Ongaku-shiryo-no-chosa*, 20  
 Onoda Tozen, 209, 213-216, 221  
 Ou-lu-wang-chi, Lute melody, 46  
 Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-1072), I, 18, 50, 149  
  
 P'ai-hsiao, Pandean pipes, IX  
 Pan Ku (32-92), 28  
 P'an Tsu-yin (1830-1890), 190  
 P'an Wei-ch'uan, Chinese at Nagasaki, 208, 223, 224  
 Pao-kung, ancient music master, 151  
 pa-ta-la, a percussion instrument, 12  
*P'ei-wen-yün-fu*, 183  
 Pelliot, P., 7, 27, 135  
 pheasant, associated with the Lute, 51, 125, 128  
 phoenix, associated with the Lute, 81, 88, 100, 101, 102, 108, 123, 127, 188  
 phoenix forehead, part of a Lute, 99  
 phoenix pool, aperture in the bottom board of a Lute, 80, 100, 183, 192  
 phoenix tongue, part of a Lute, 100  
 phoenix wings, part of a Lute, 100  
 pillars used for making Lutes, 176  
 Ping-ching, name of a Lute, 17  
 ping-lieh, v. *tuan-zen*  
 P'ing, Duke (557-532 B.C.), 136  
*P'ing-chi-ch'i-i-pao-ming-chi*, 194  
*P'ing-ch'in-kuan-ts'ung-shu*, 167  
 P'ing-sha-lo-yen, Lute melody, 194  
 p'i-p'a, four stringed mandoline, 1, 2, 19, 39, 50, 54, 93, 123, 182, 186, 188  
 Plum blossom cracks, v. *mei-hua*  
 Po Chü-i, famous T'ang poet, 201  
 Po-tzu-ya, famous ancient Lute master, 8, 73, 74, 81, 83, 95, 96, 186, 192  
 Po-ya, v. *Po-tzu-ya*, *Yü Po-ya*  
*Po-ya-hsin-fa*, 50, 171  
 Pu-an (1115-1169), 50, 51  
*Pu-an-yin-su-ch'an-shih-yü-lu*, 51  
*Pu-hsü-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 88, 139, 170

- pu-tzu, v. *chien-tzu*  
*Pu-wang-shih*, 52
- Rai Sanyo (1780-1832), 216  
 rangakusha, Jap. students of Dutch learning, 208, 216  
 Ranshitsu, Jap. Lute player, 214, 221  
 Rei-wa, v. *Ling-ho*  
 Ri-jun (1738-1813), 224  
 Rites, Book of, v. *Li-chi*  
*Ritsuryo-bensetsu*, 214  
 rubbings, of Lutes, 181, 189, 191  
*Ryang-kem-sin-po*, 203
- Sacred Treasures of Nara*, 186  
 Sakamaki, S., modern Jap. scholar, 219  
 Sanjo Shotaro, modern Jap. scholar, 200  
*San-ts'ai-t'u-hui*, 117, 118  
 Sato Itcho, v. *Sato Mosai*  
 Sato Mosai, Jap. Lute player, 118, 223  
 se, the Chinese cither, II, 6-9, 11, 12, 15, 19, 26, 72, 156, 157, 164, 200  
*Se-pu*, 8  
 Serpent belly cracks, v. *she-fu*  
 Setsudo, Jap. Lute player (1782-1842), 222  
 Shang-yang bird, 122  
 Shao Yung (1011-1077), 90  
 she-fu, v. *tuan-wen*  
*Shen-chi-pi-pu*, 86, 88, 90, 92-94, 96, 139, 164, 170, 194  
 shen-chia-sheng, old musical term, 92  
 Shen Chou (1427-1509), 64  
*Shen-i-ching*, 135  
 Shen-jen, Lute melody, 81  
 Shen-nung, the mythical Emperor, 5, 72  
 Shen Wen-ying, Ch'ing scholar, 19  
*Shen-yin-shu*, 194  
 Shen Yo (441-513), 92  
 sheng, ancient mouth-organ, IX, 19, 156, 157, appendix IV, plate III  
 Sheng Hsün, 153  
*Shichigenkin-no-denrai*, 211, 217  
*Shih-chi*, 61, 136, 157  
*Shih-ching*, 6, 36, 41, 52, 66, 72, 93, 138, 139, 167, 183  
 Shih-hsiang, ancient music master, 8, 81, 83  
*Shih-pen*, 72  
 Shih Sheng-tsu, 13th century, 19  
 Shih-t'an, Lute melody, 50-52  
 Shih-wen, ancient music master, 8
- Shimpo-zenji, Jap. Lute player, 214  
 Shin-etsu (1639-1695), 20, 184, 197, 198, 200, 204-209, 211, 212, 219, 223  
 Shinomoto Chikudo, Jap. Lute player, 219, 220  
 Shinraku Kanso, Jap. Lute player, 211, 217-220  
 Shinryuji, temple at Edo, 214  
*Shinzoku-kibun*, 202  
 Shiragi-koto, Jap. cither, 197  
 Shisendo, retreat of Ishikawa Jozan, 204  
 Shitara Junjo, Jap. Lute player, 214  
*Shodo-zenshu*, 189, 191  
*Sho-en*, 187, 213  
*Shosetsu-jii*, 203  
 Shosoin, repository at Nara, 181-184, 186, 196, 203  
*Shosoin-gomotsu-danawake-mokuroku*, 181  
 shou-shih, postures of the hands, 115  
 shou-yin, v. *coda*  
*Shu-ching*, 7, 41, 79, 81  
 Shu Hsi, 3d century, 52  
*Shu-huai-tsao*, 94  
*Shu-i-chi*, 135  
*Shu-lin-ch'ing-hua*, 193  
 Shuang-t'ien-ling-to, name of a Lute 196  
 Shun, the mythical Emperor, 5, 41, 54, 72, 80, 81, 151, 196  
*Shun-shui-i-shu*, 223  
*Shunsui-shushi-danki*, 202  
*Shushunsui-sensei-bunshu*, 223  
*Shushunsui-zenshu*, 223  
*Shuo-fu*, 101, 153  
*Shuo-wen*, 11  
*Shuo-wen-hsieh-tzu-chien*, 12  
*Shuo-wen-hsieh-tzu-ku-lin*, 11  
*Shuo-wen-shih-li*, 12  
 siddhi, magic power, 48  
 singing girls, 19, 40, 47; forbidden to touch the Lute, 61  
 so, Jap. cither, 198, 200  
 Soulié, G., 20, 120, 122, 124, 125, 128, 132, 136, 154, 165  
 Ssu-ch'in, Lute melody, 81  
 Ssu-ma Ch'ien (born 145 B.C.), 37, 136  
 Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju (179-117 B.C.), 38, 68  
 Ssu-ma Kuang (1019-1086), 217  
*Ssu-shih-erh-chang-ching*, 62  
 Stradivari, A., 175  
 Su Ching, Ch'ing scholar, 172

- Sugimoto Ka-en, Jap. Lute player, 219-221
- Sugiura Baigaku (1734-1792), 221, 222
- Sugiura Kinzen, Jap. Lute player, 206, 211, 212, 214
- Su Shih, v. *Su Tung-p'o*
- Su Tung-p'o (1036-1201), III, 90, 154
- Su-wang, name of a Lute, 207, 213
- Su Wu (died 60 B.C.), 93
- Su-yüan-shih-pu*, IV
- Sui-shih-yin-yüeh-chih*, 39
- Sui-t'ang-yen-yüeh-tiao-yen-chiu*, 38
- Sun Ch'eng-en, Ming scholar, 170
- Sun Feng, famous mounter of the Ming period, 152
- Sun Hai-po, modern scholar, 6
- Sun Hsing-yen (1753-1808), 167
- Sun Jou-chih, Liang scholar, 136
- Sun Teng, Lute master of the 3rd century, 174, 175
- Sun tzu on the art of war*, 186
- Sung-feng-ko-ch'in-pu*, 94
- Sung-hsien-kuan-ch'in-pu*, 206
- Sung-yü-chi*, 111
- Suzuki, D. T., 127
- Suzuki Hyakuto, Jap. Lute player, 219
- Suzuki Ran-en, v. *Suzuki Ryu*
- Suzuki Ryu (1741-1790), 198, 201, 214
- Syong Kyon, Korean scholar of the 15th century, 166
- Ta-ch'ing-chi-fu-hsien-che-chuan*, 51
- Tagami Michi, v. *Kikusha*
- Ta-hsüeh*, 82
- Ta-huan-ko-ch'in-pu*, 104
- t'a-pen, v. *rubbing*
- tai-i, doctor of Chinese medicine attached to the Shogunate, 208
- Tai K'uei (died 396), 153
- Tai Yüan, Ch'ing scholar, 172
- t'ai-ku-i-yin, qualification of Lute music, I
- T'ai-ku-i-yin*, by Chu Ch'üan, 164
- T'ai-ku-i-yin*, by Yang Lun, 60, 85, 171
- T'ai-p'ing, music of Emperor Shun, 80
- T'ai-shan, mountain in Shantung, 73, 95, 99
- T'ai-tsung, the Sung Emperor, 151
- Taisho-issai-kyo*, Buddhist Canon publ.during the Taisho period, a new critical edition of the Chinese Tripitaka, Tokyo 1924-1929, 49, 62
- Takata Tadachika, contemporary Jap. sinologue; his *Kochuhen* was publ. in 1918, 12
- Takakura Yui, Jap. Lute player, 221
- Taki Rankei (1732-1801), 214-216
- Taki Ryo-ichi, modern Jap. musicologist, 20, 191
- Tanabe Hisao, modern Jap. musicologist, 86, 201
- T'an-chi-s'ung-shu*, 68, 105
- T'ang I-ming, Ch'ing scholar, 172
- T'ang-shan-fu-jen, concubine of Han Kao-tsu, 8
- t'ang-shang-yüeh, a class of court music, 2
- T'ang-shih-hua-pu*, ill. XVI; XVII
- T'ang Shou-ch'ien, modern scholar, 223
- Tao-chien-lu*, 147
- Tao-te-ching*, 16, 44, 108, 127, 195
- T'ao Ch'ien (372-427), 18, 89, 135
- T'ao Hung-ching (452-536), 147
- T'ao Tsung-i, 14th century, 176
- Taori-giku*, 224
- Te-yin-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 66
- Teng, S.Y., 117
- T'eng-wang-ko, famous poem, with an introduction, by Wang Po (647-675); Lute melody, 94
- The Dragon in China and Japan*, 195
- The Importance of living*, 104, 187
- The invention of printing in China*, 181
- The music of Hindostan*, 126
- The T'ien-hsia Monthly*, 162
- The Tokugawa princes of Mito*, 204
- ti-ming, inscriptions on the bottom board of a Lute, 179
- ti-chu, stud inside a Lute, 176
- Ti I, Ch'ing scholar, 69
- t'i-mu, superscription, 87
- tiao, modes, 85
- tiao-i, musical patterns, 85, 86
- T'ieh-ch'in-t'ung-chien-lou-ts'ang-shu-mu lu*, 194
- t'ien-chu, stud inside a Lute, 176
- T'ien-i-ko, famous Ming library, 170
- T'ien-i-ko-ts'ang-shu-k'ao*, 170
- T'ien-lai, name of a Lute, 174
- T'ien-lai-ko, name of a library, 174
- t'ien-tz'u, adding words to a melody, 94
- T'ien-wen-ko-ch'in-pu-chi-ch'eng*, 29, 96, 139, 149, 166, 172, 194
- Ting Fu-pao, contemporary scholar, 11

- Ting Hsiung-fei, Ch'ing scholar, 69  
 Ting Ling-wei, immortal, 135  
 Tocho, Jap. Lute player, 213  
 Todaiji, Jap. temple, 181  
*Toho-gakuho*, 20  
*Toko-iko*, 206  
*Toko-kinfu*, edited by Suzuki, 198, 206, 214  
*Toko-kinfu*, edited by Sugiura, 211, 216  
*Toko-zenji*, v. *Shin-etsu*  
*Toko-zenshu*, 204, 206, 211  
 Tokugawa Academy, 202, 211, 212  
*T'oung-pao*, 23  
*Toyo-ongaku-kenkyu*, 62  
*Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*  
     II, 204, 219, 223  
 Ts'ai Yen, daughter of Ts'ai Yung, 92, 151  
 Ts'ai Yung (133-192), 53, 55, 92, 94, 99, 100, 151, 152, 154, 167  
*Ts'ang-ch'in-lu*, 180, 181, 193  
 tsao-ch'i, varnish for covering the body of a Lute, 177  
 ts'ao-shu, cursive script, 191  
*Ts'ao-t'ang-chi*, 151  
 Ts'ao Yin (1658-1712), 167  
 Tseng Tien, disciple of Confucius, 7  
 Ts'ui Hui, 153  
 Ts'ui Piao, Chin scholar, 136  
 Tsuji Buzen-no-kami, Jap. musician, 209  
*Tsun-sheng-pa-chien*, 31, 45, 59, 140, 147, 168, 179, 194  
*Ts'ung-shu-shu-mu-wei-pien*, 117  
*Tu-hua-chai-ts'ung-shu*, 167  
 T'u Lung, Ming scholar, 62, 167  
 tuan, part of a Lute melody, 87, 96  
 Tuan-mu Tz'u, v. *Tzu-kung*  
 Tuan-wen, cracks in the lacquer of old Lutes, 17, 177, 178, 184, 207; type *she-fu*, 177, 191, type *niu-mao*, 177, type *mei-hua*, 145, 178, type *ping-lieh*, 178, 183.—How to distinguish false—, 178.—*Tuan-wen* of Japanese-made Lutes, 184.  
 Tuan Yü-tsai (1735-1815), 11  
 Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636), 118  
*Tung-chuang-lun-hua*, 57  
 Tung-t'ing, lake, 91, 94  
 Tung T'ing-lan, T'ang musician, 92  
 t'ung, a sort of wood used for building Lutes, 4, 100, 175, 176  
 twelve sonorous tubes, 79, 101  
 tzu, a sort of wood used for building Lutes, 4, 175, 176  
 Tzu-kung, disciple of Confucius, 61, 155  
 Tzu-lu, disciple of Confucius, 7.  
 tzu-t'an, red sandalwood, 4  
*Tzu-yüan-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 161, 171  
*Ts'u-yüan*, 52  
 Urakami Gyokudo (1745-1820), 209, 215, 216  
*Uzuho-monogatari*, 198  
 Vairocana, 181  
 vibrato, 1, 50, 78, 106, 112, 115, 119, 123, 125-127, 131  
 vibrato ritardando, 78, 106, 112, 125  
 vina, Indian stringed instrument, 50  
 Visser, M. W. de, 195  
 wagon, Jap. cither, 197, 200  
 wai-tiao, minor modes, 85  
 wan, to appreciate beauty, 173, 174  
 Wan-ho-sung, name of a Lute, 207  
 wan-yüeh, enjoy looking at the moon, 173  
*Wan-yüeh-yo*, 68  
 Wang Cho, Ch'ing scholar, 68  
 Wang Chün, Ch'ing scholar, 12  
 Wang Hui-chih, son of Wang Hsi-chih, 93  
 Wang Hsi-chih (321-379), 93, 187  
 Wang Kuang-ch'i, modern musicologist, 20, 132  
 Wang San-ak, Korean minister of the 6th century, 203  
 Wang T'ing, Ming scholar, 170  
 Wang Yen-po, 154  
 Wang Ying-chen, Ming scholar, 170  
 Wang Yü, Ch'ing painter, 57  
 wei, v. *coda*  
 Wei, ancient state, 68, 91  
 Wei, odes of the Shih-ching, traditionally denoting lewd and vulgar music, 36, 37, 38, 183. V. *Cheng*  
 Wei Hsiang, Han scholar, 28  
 Wei Yeh (960-1019), 151  
 Wen, King, 80, 93. V. *Wu*  
 Wen, Prince (426-387 B.C.), 37, 54, 151  
*Wen-fang-yo*, 68  
*Wen-hsüan*, 52, 53, 185  
*Wen-hui-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 117, 118  
 Weng T'ung-ho (1830-1904), 190  
 Wieger, L., 12



- Wilhelm, R., 23  
 Wu, the Emperor (140-87 B.C.), 38  
 Wu, King, 80, 81, 137. V. *Wen*  
 Wu-chang, music composed by Confucius, 37  
 Wu Ch'en (1249-1331), 71, 74  
 Wu Ch'en (1249-1331), 71, 74  
 Wu-chih-chai-ch'in-pu, 32, 72, 79, 106, 128, 171, 172, 191  
 Wu Ching-ch'ao, Ch'ing scholar, 17  
 Wu Hung, Ch'ing scholar, 171  
 Wu-kang-ch'in-pu, 164  
 Wu-ming, Lute name, V, ill 1b  
  
*Ya-ch'in-chao-shih-ch'i-p'ien*, 28  
*Ya-ch'in-ming-lu*, 101  
 Yamada Takao, modern Jap. scholar, 201  
 Yamamoto Tokuhō, Jap. Lute player, 220  
 221  
 yamato-goto, v. *wagon*  
 Yang, the Emperor (605-616), 39  
 Yang-ch'un, Lute melody, 113  
*Yang-ch'un-t'ang-ch'in-pu*, 63, 65, 117, 118, 168, 223  
 Yang Hsiung (53 B.C.-18 A.D.), 28, 53  
 Yang Lun, Ming musician, 50, 51, 60, 85, 171  
 Yang Piao-cheng, Ming musician, 48, 66, 71, 72, 76, 89, 91, 97, 171  
 yang-sheng, nurturing life, 44, 45  
 Yang Shou-ching (1835-1915), 27  
 Yang Tsung-chi, modern musicologist, 9, 27, 32, 92, 96, 132, 169, 179, 180, 181  
 Yao, the mythical Emperor, 54, 81, 151, 192, 196  
 yao, part of a Lute, 99  
 Yeh Chang-po, Ch'ing scholar, 20  
 Yeh Hsiang-kao, Ming scholar, 168  
 Yeh Ho-fu (died 1937), 189 sq., and cf. dedication of this book.  
 Yeh Meng-te (1077-1148), 138  
 Yen, ancient music master, 136, 137  
 Yen-kuo-heng-yang, Lute melody, 93  
 Yen P'ei-nien, Ch'ing scholar, 172  
 yen-tsu, knobs on the bottom board of a Lute, 100  
*Yih-ching*, Book of Changes, 79, 86  
  
 yin-ch'i, a special kind of inlaid work, 183  
 186; cf. the discussion of this term by P. Pelliot, in *T'oung Pao* vol. XXIII (1924), p. 261 sq.  
*Yin-yüeh-tsa-chih*, 20, 50  
*Yin-yüeh-tz'u-tien*, 92  
 Ying, the people of—, 111  
 Ying Shao, 2nd century, 71, 72, 95  
 Ying-shih, priest-musician of the T'ang period, 49  
 yo-shan, part of a Lute, 99, 192  
 Yoshimune, the Tokugawa Shogun, 214  
 Yu-lan, a Lute melody, 27, 169  
 Yung-fu-ssu, monastery at Hangchow, 205  
 Yü, the mythical Emperor, 81  
*Yü-ch'iao-hsien-hua*, 90  
*Yü-ch'iao-tui-wen*, 90  
 yü-fu, the old fisherman, 90  
*Yü-hai*, 34  
 Yü-ko, Lute melody 90, 91  
*Yü-ku-chai-ch'in-pu*, 29, 175, 178, 190, 193  
*Yü-po-ya-shuai-ch'in-hsieh-chih-yin*, 96;  
 this late version of the story of Po-tzu-ya has been translated by T. Pavie, under the title of *Le Luth brisé*, in his *Contes et Nouvelles*, and by A. Webster, *Yu Pe-ya's Lute*.  
 Yü-shun, Lute name, 206  
 Yü Yen, Ming scholar, 171  
 Yüan Chan, Chin scholar, 153  
 Yüan Chi (210-263), 55  
 Yüan Hsien, disciple of Confucius, 155  
*Yüeh-chi*, 5, 22-25, 34-37, 39, 41, 80  
 yüeh-ch'in, moon-shaped guitar, 1, 19  
 Yüeh-fu, Bureau for Music, 38  
 yüeh-fu, a genre of songs, 38, 42  
*Yüeh-fu-shih-chi*, 42  
*Yüeh-hsüeh-kuei-fan*, v. *Ak-hak-kwe-pom*  
*Yüeh-lü-ch'üan-shu*, 66, 193  
*Yüeh-shu*, 2  
  
*Zoku-nihon-koki*, 198  
 Zuhon-sokankai, Jap. society for reprinting rare Chinese illustrated books, IV







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